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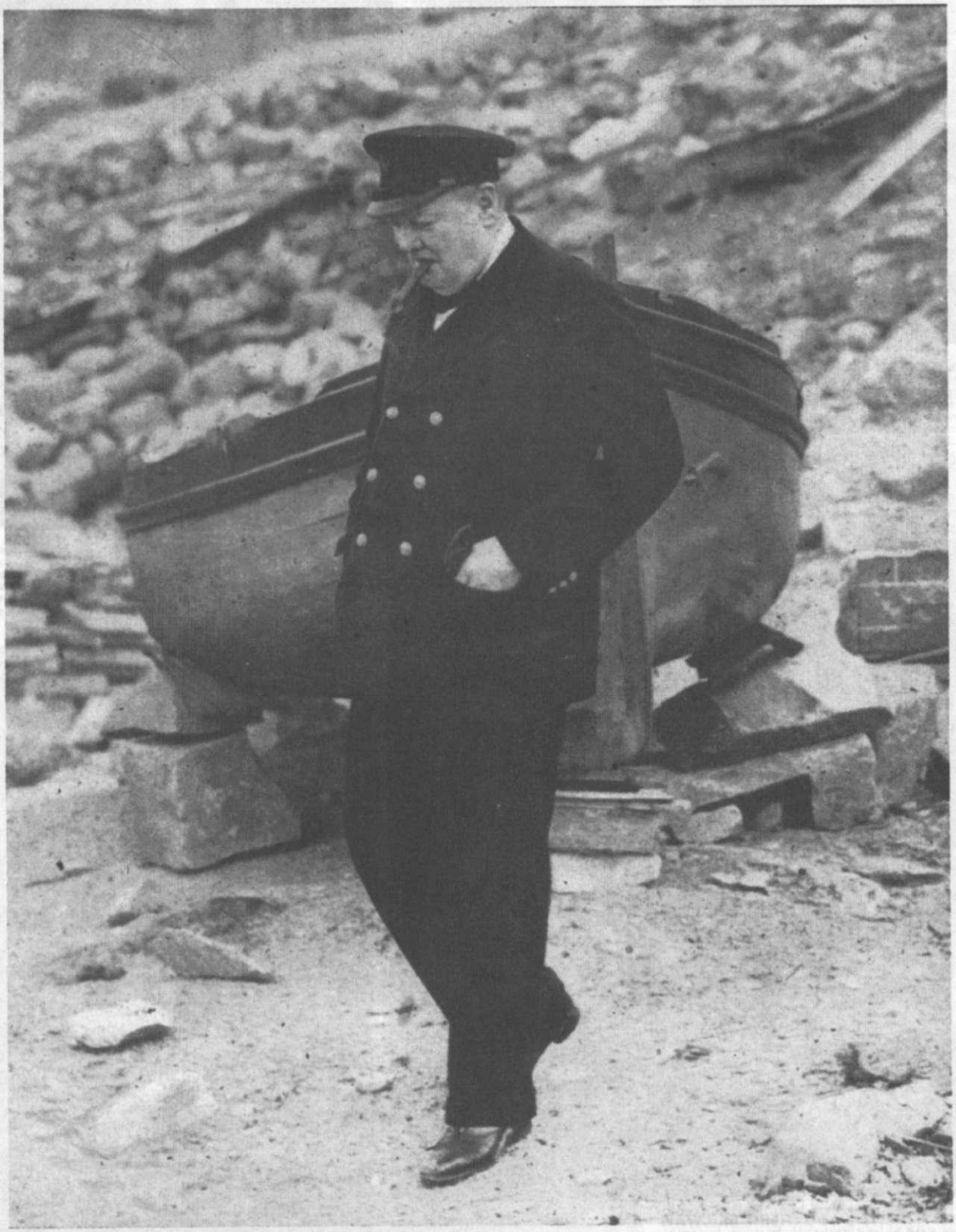
SIXPENCE — Edited by Sir John Hammerton — JANUARY 7, 1944



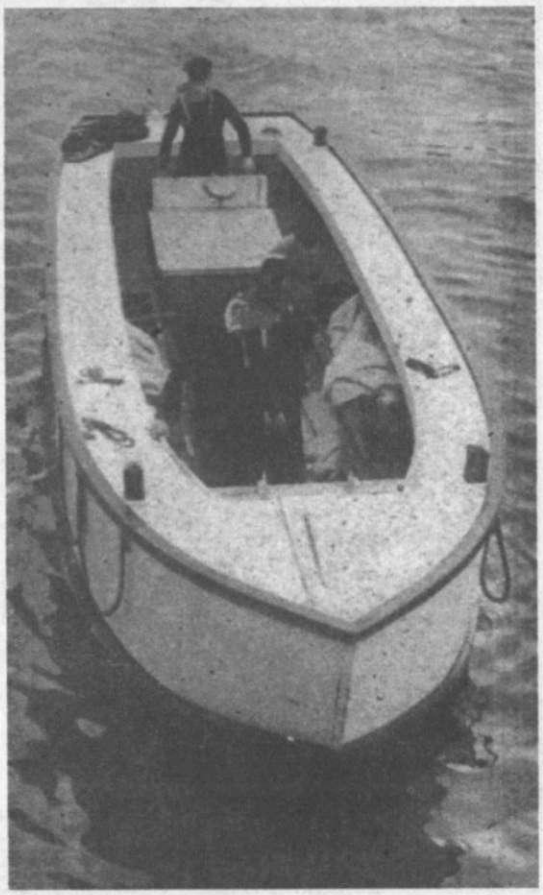
ON HIS WAY TO N. AFRICA for the historic Three-Power Conference at Cairo (Nov. 22-26, 1943) Mr. Churchill spent two days at Malta. He is here seen amid the ruins of the much-bombed Valetta dockyard area, where he received a tumultuous welcome. It was with the utmost concern that the people of the United Nations learned on Dec. 16 that the Premier was seriously ill with pneumonia, but by Dec. 23 it was stated that he was well on the way to recovery.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Sidelights of War Seen by Our Roving Camera

ARAB GIFT TO MR. CHURCHILL. Two Arabian princes, the Emir Feisal and the Emir Khalid, sons of King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, visited No. 10, Downing Street on Dec. 6, 1943, and on behalf of their father presented Mrs. Churchill with a jewelled Arab sword. The Premier's wife is here accepting the sword from Prince Emir Feisal in her husband's absence in the Middle East (see p p. 495-499). On the extreme left stands Sheik Hafiz Wahba.

HISTORIC CITY CEREMONY. The City of Chicago flag was exchanged for that of the City of London, and the Union Jack for the Stars and Stripes, at an impressive exchange of standards at London's Mansion House on Nov. 9, 1943. Gen. Devers, commanding U.S. Army in Europe, talks to H.A.C. (Honourable Artillery Company) pikemen in 17th-century uniform.



GAS TEST ON THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY. At an extensive demonstration and exercise held by the Southern Railway in a Kent district recently, lengths of rail were taken up, a crater dug and mustard gas sprayed in the area. Signal and telegraph departments went into action, and in a short time trains moved over the decontaminated section of the line. A decontamination squad (above) is hard at work clearing away contaminated sleepers and rails. Right, Water ambulance launch now in use by Combined Operations is fitted to carry six cot patients, here seen in their well-protected bunks.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; New York Times Photos; Topical Press

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

By the end of Nov. 1943 it had become clear, from the marked and continuous fall in Allied shipping losses over a period of months, that the battle of the Atlantic had for all practical purposes been won. The striking victories gained by aircraft and escort vessels in the first half of December, over U-boat packs making desperate attempts to revive their menace, gave further proof of the efficiency not only of defensive measures but of our counter-offensive. Proof had also been given of the value of our new bases in the Azores.

With the immense economies effected by reopening the Mediterranean route, and with new construction vastly exceeding losses, it is evident that our power of multiplying offensive fronts, and of enlarging the scale of operations, will rapidly increase. It will be seen, therefore, that the winning of the battle of the Atlantic not only implies that our offensive action against the U-boats has gained the upper hand, but that increased offensive power all round results from it. I doubt whether the Teheran Conference, and the subsequent Cairo Conference in which Turkey took part, could have been conducted in such an atmosphere of confidence if the situation in the Atlantic had imposed limitations on what the Anglo-American representatives could safely promise to undertake.

The progress of the Italian campaign is bound to be slow, so long as the enemy is determined to fight hard for every foot of ground that gives him such ample opportunities for delaying and defensive action. Anything like a sensational break-through on either the 8th or 5th Army front obviously cannot be expected ; and, in the uncertain weather conditions of winter, amphibious operations to turn the enemy's positions must present few attractions.

On small-scale maps the day to day progress of the armies may seem insignificant ; but from the beginning of October, when Naples had just been captured, to the middle of December the 5th Army advanced some 30 miles in the coastal region through appallingly difficult country and under desperate weather conditions.

It had not broken through the position on which the enemy had apparently hoped to stand for the winter, but had broken into it and secured a number of important tactical features. On the Adriatic coast the 8th Army's advance in the same period had covered about 60 miles and had definitely broken through the enemy's winter position on the Sangro, though without being able to prevent his retirement in good order.

These may seem small gains for 2½ months of hard fighting when compared with the great areas that have changed hands rapidly in Russia, France and Poland ; but they should be compared rather with the advances made in the offensives in the last war. When the enemy stands to fight with determination only a very deep penetration or outflanking of his position will compel him to carry out a long strategic withdrawal ; and neither was feasible in the Italian theatre where the terrain provided natural opportunities for defence in great depth. In the mountainous central sector of the front the advance has actually covered longer distances during the period. The enemy, owing to indifferent communications, could only hold the ground lightly and there were in consequence greater opportunities of employing infiltration tactics.

The Allied troops have evidently fought magnificently throughout, and have inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy, compelling him to employ more of his reserve divisions than he had probably ever intended. In the long run this may prove to be of more importance than a rapid advance.

It is unfortunate, though perhaps unavoidable, that in armies composed of elements drawn from many quarters the part played by British troops should be somewhat obscured. Although General Clark commands the 5th American Army, there is in it, I understand, actually a majority of British troops and they have certainly taken a full share in its operations. Being an American army, however, American war correspondents are naturally drawn to it and take a special interest in American exploits.

The 8th is, of course, a British Army, but obviously, both for clarity in description and in justice, the splendid New Zealand, Canadian and Indian Divisions, which do not bear British distinctive numbers, must be mentioned by name. British Divisions are at times mentioned by their numbers, but since that might give useful information to the enemy this is not generally permitted. It is consequently not easy for correspondents to indicate how many British Divisions have actually been engaged. One thing those of us who have friends or relatives fighting in Italy may be sure of is that if they belong to infantry or R.E. units they are playing a dominant part in the battle. Splendidly as the artillery, aircraft and, where practicable, tanks have cooperated, it has been, and probably will continue to be, essentially a campaign for infantry with the Engineers as an indispensable adjunct.

ITALIAN FRONT, Dec. 15, 1943. Right flank of the 8th Army was menacing strongly fortified Ortona, and Orsogna by Dec. 22. A 5-mile bridgehead had been established across the Moro. *Courtesy of The Times*

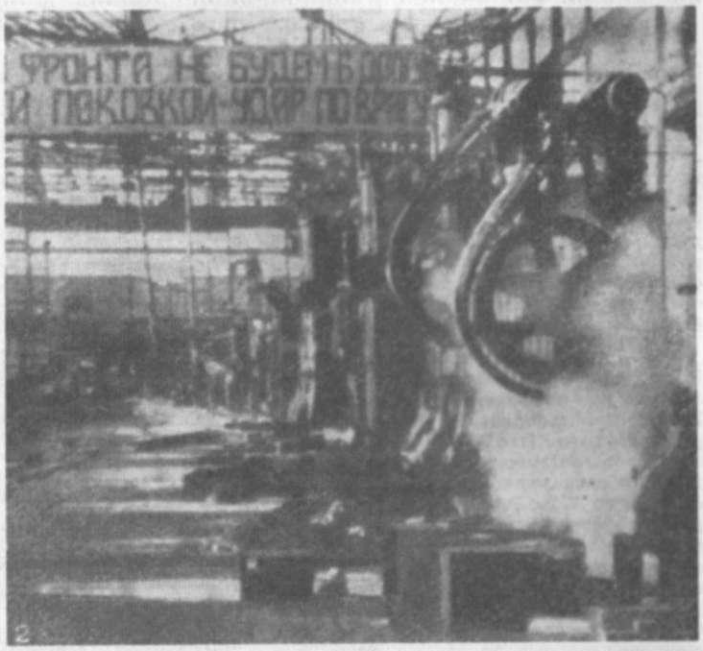
In Russia, as I write in mid-December, the drawn-out autumn battles are approaching their end and winter operations of a different order are due to begin. The crisis in the Kiev salient has not yet passed, but with every day that Vatutin's army continues to retain its cohesion the chances that Manstein's counter-offensive will achieve a major success diminish. Up till now he has had the immense advantage of possessing good railway communications behind him, whereas the Russians have had none west of the Dnieper. But when frost hardens the ground, permitting motor transport to function more efficiently, this advantage will have less value, and already Von Manstein must have expended most of his reserves.

The Russians have, during the last month, fought a magnificent defensive battle in the Salient under most unfavourable conditions. If it can be successfully maintained for a few more days it may prove of even greater importance than the victories gained in offensive battles farther south in the bend of the Dnieper.

In his counter-offensive Von Manstein gambled with high stakes and if, as seems probable, he has lost, the expenditure of his reserve power may prove more disastrous to him than the loss of his positions in the middle Dnieper and of the lateral railway through Znamenka. Nevertheless, the loss of the latter will make the task of maintaining supplies for his troops in the Dnieper bend exceedingly difficult ; already he is reported to be using air transport to supplement other means of communication.

SOVIET MILITARY MISSION TO ITALY, it was revealed on Dec. 13, 1943, was headed by Maj.-Gen. Vasiliev, victor of Perekop, capture of which on Nov. 1, 1943, bottled up forces in the Crimea. Gen. Vasiliev (centre, wearing glasses) is seen with two of his officers during a tour of inspection of the Monte Camino sector. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Sword of Honour City: Stalingrad Resurgent



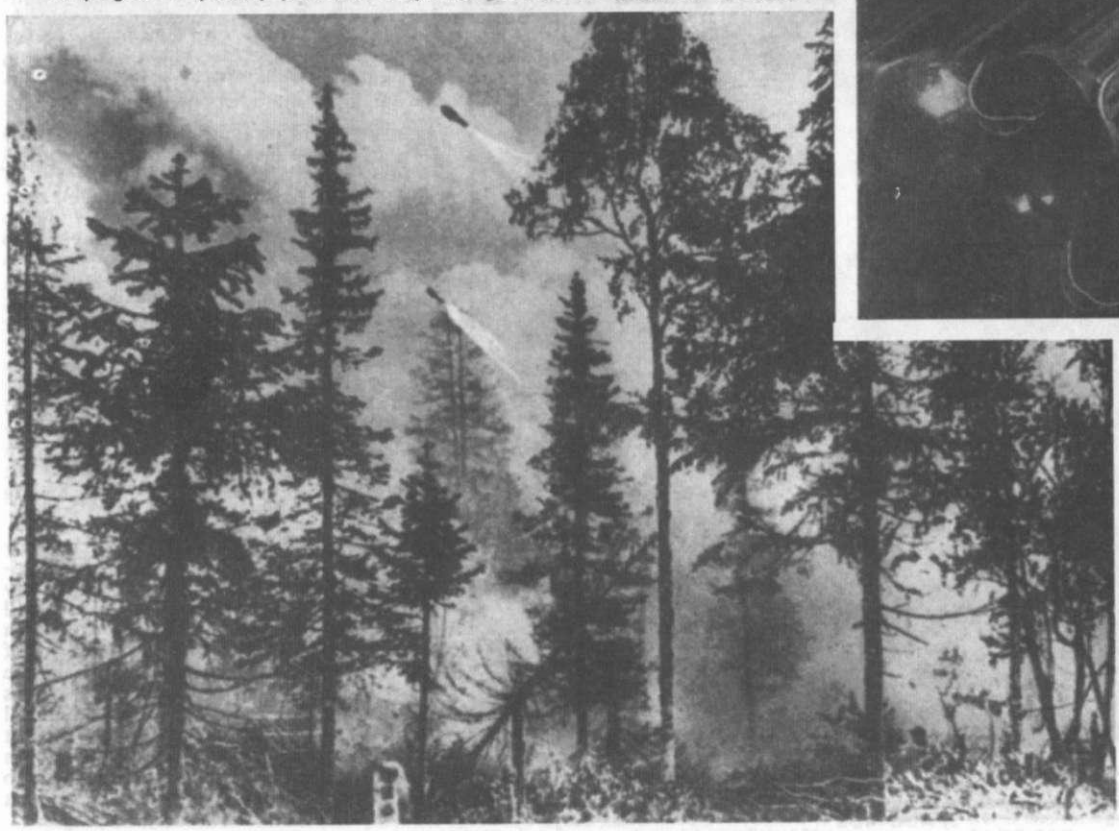
A MERE 3,000 CITIZENS REMAINED ALIVE among the ruins when Stalingrad was liberated by Soviet forces on Jan. 31, 1943. Refugees then began to return, and by November 10,500 reconstructed or newly-built residences, mostly huts, had been occupied. Lessons are resumed in a renovated classroom (1) of the battered Lenin School (3), whilst the upper storeys are made usable again. Citizens combine to repair a settlement (4), and tanks are once more produced in the tractor plant (2), where Rashida Shakirova (5) is leading electrician. See p. 495.

Photos, Pictorial Press

Germans Use Rocket Shells in Russia and Italy

ON ITS WAY is a rocket shell seen (above) leaving the gun. Principle of the device is the same as that of the simple rocket, which is propelled by the reaction created by the jet of expanding gases from the tail. The fuel employed in the German missile to boost its progress is possibly petrol, or a liquefied gas such as oxygen or hydrogen.

FIRED FROM ITS CRATE is this type of German incendiary rocket, (known as the 32 cm.) here seen held in the firing position by U.S. soldiers who captured it intact during the fighting in Italy.



ROCKET-PROPELLED shells and bombs have featured prominently in recent enemy "secret weapon" propaganda. It has even been reported that 15-ton rocket shells have been employed against Leningrad from German bases over 100 miles away! Photographs have been released by the enemy through neutral channels to give credence to Nazi claims that multiple rocket guns (rear view above) are being used on the Eastern Front; six shells are fired in quick succession, and in the photograph one of the gunners is seen sighting the weapon, whilst another bends down (bottom left corner) to adjust the last of the six detonators. Left, two rocket shells hurtling high above a Russian forest.

Photos, U.S. Official, Keystone Associated Press

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

At first sight readers may think our naval and air critics are encroaching on each other's ground in this number. But in fact Mr. McMurtrie deals interestingly with air power from the seaman's viewpoint whereas Capt. Macmillan (in page 508) gives an airman's comments on the sea war.

MORE than once in these pages I have expressed the opinion that the German Navy will never again proceed to sea as a fleet or squadron, except possibly on some evasive enterprise in which it could scarcely be intercepted, such as the dash to Spitzbergen. It was recently revealed that last summer the Home Fleet, under the command of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, in conjunction with a task force of the United States Navy under Rear-Admiral Olaf M. Hustvedt, practically trailed its coat outside the anchorage in which the German fleet lay in Northern Norwegian waters. So cautious was the enemy response that only a reconnaissance aircraft ventured to approach the Allied force: and as the result of the Fleet Air Arm's vigilance, it failed to return to its base.

IT has since been the turn of the Japanese to be treated to a similar demonstration. During the second week in Dec. 1943 a strong force of the United States Pacific Fleet, comprising battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers and destroyers, cruised within a comparatively short range of Truk, the island stronghold which is the principal Japanese naval base in the Pacific. Though it has been stated that the main enemy fleet is stationed there, it gave no sign of its presence on this occasion. Yet it has been suggested that the importance of Truk is such that the Japanese would be likely to fight a major action, throwing in all their naval resources, were it to be threatened.

Having regard to the recent tendency of our Eastern enemy to husband his resources in heavy ships, it seems doubtful if Truk would be regarded as worth a supreme gamble. Rather does it seem likely that the main fleet will continue to be held in reserve, to be risked only in the last resort. A serious assault would probably find only subsidiary naval vessels at Truk, which would endeavour to escape if complete investment of the group were threatened.

PARTICULARS released in Dec. 1943 of a successful action against U-boats in the North Atlantic by the Royal Navy in conjunction with Coastal Command aircraft included the mention of a new class of frigate, known officially as the "Captain" class. There appears to be a very large number of these useful craft, all of which were constructed in the United States. The first few were launched in U.S. Navy Yards in 1942, but recently the names of a great many more have been reported in the Press on both sides of the Atlantic as having been launched from private shipyards in America. These include such names as Berry, Blackwood, Bligh, Bullen, Capel, Duff, Foley and Louis, all of whom fought under Nelson at the Nile, Copenhagen or Trafalgar; Stayner, who was Blake's right-hand man at Santa Cruz de Tenerife in April 1657; Drury, who was with Admiral Duncan at Camperdown; Calder, who was captain of the fleet under Jervis at St. Vincent; Bentinck and Thornbrough, who were amongst Howe's captains at the Glorious First of June 1794.

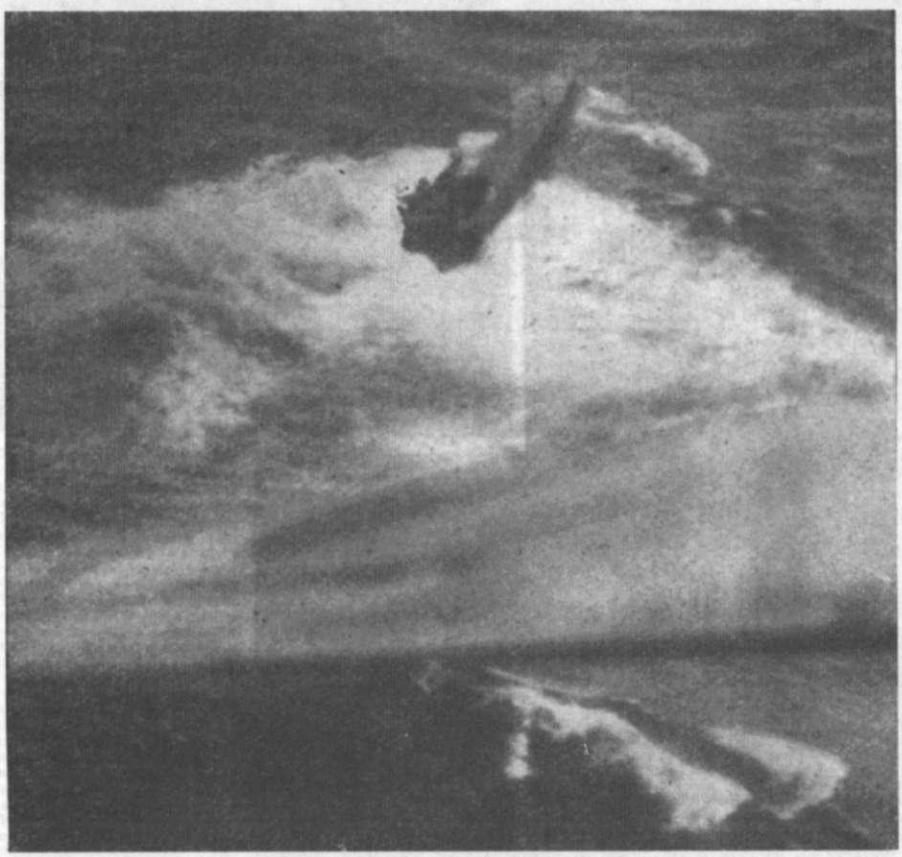
According to particulars published in the American Press, these vessels are identical in type with those known in the United States Navy as "destroyer escorts." The latter displace about 1,300 tons and are 300 feet in length with a beam of 35 feet. They are armed with three dual purpose guns of 3-in. calibre, together with two 40-millimetre Bofors pieces and four 20-millimetre Oerlikons. Machinery varies in different ships, some having turbine engines, others triple expansion and still others Diesel motors. Horse-power is stated as 5,400, equal to a speed of over 21 knots, or sufficient to overtake any U-boat. Judging from the particulars given these little ships are making a useful contribution to the Allied victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

CREDIT has also to be accorded to the increasing number of escort aircraft carriers which are employed to bridge the mid-Atlantic gap, between the effective ranges of shore-based planes. According to statements made in America, the United States Navy now includes over 40 of these valuable vessels, many of which have been improvised from merchant ship hulls, though some of the more recent have been specially built for the purpose. The earlier ones were named after sounds, the later ones after bays, e.g. Long Island, Copahee, Barnes, Core, Hamlin; and Natoma Bay, Fanshaw Bay, Kadashan Bay, Nehenta Bay; but a few of the latest type have been given battle names, a privilege hitherto reserved for the big fleet aircraft carriers. Instances of the latter class of name are Casablanca, Guadalcanal, Tripoli, Corregidor and Wake Island.

Though fewer names have been published, it seems reasonable to conclude that British escort aircraft carriers must by this time be almost as numerous. Names that have actually been released on this side of the Atlantic include Archer, Attacker, Battler, Biter, Fencer, Hunter, Ravager, Stalker, Searcher, Tracker. According to the American Press, one named Chaser was launched in June 1942 and a sister ship, the Pursuer, in the following month. Two named Striker and Trailer had gone afloat in the previous May. This year the launch in the U.S.A. of an escort carrier for the Royal Navy named Ameer has been announced. From her name she would appear to be of a different type from the others mentioned.

AMERICAN escort carriers appear to vary in displacement from about 7,700 tons to fully 10,000 tons. Their complement of aircraft may be as many as 30, and their armament includes light guns on high-angle mountings, ranging from machine-guns to 3-in. or 4-in. weapons. In some cases Diesel motors are used for propulsion; in others geared turbines, supplied with steam by watertube boilers of the Foster-Wheeler pattern. There is no doubt that the very considerable number of aircraft carriers now available for service, not only in the Battle of the Atlantic but also in other spheres of operation, has greatly relieved the pressure on the Allied Navies. At Salerno, aircraft from carriers of this (escort) type proved invaluable in affording continuous cover to the invading troops while land-based planes refuelled.

One of the results of a more plentiful supply of carriers has been the discarding of seaplanes as an item of equipment by the majority of cruisers. There is obviously little need for a seaplane's services if a carrier is within reach; while the considerable amount of deck space occupied by an aircraft and the necessary catapult can ill be spared. There is also the added danger of fire from the petrol that has to be carried. Judging from recent official photographs the heavy 10,000-ton cruisers, which are liable to be detailed to distant waters in quest of raiders, are almost the only ones that now carry seaplanes.



LAST MOMENTS OF A U-BOAT, one of six destroyed by Coastal Command aircraft in a sea-and-air action fought around a N. Atlantic convoy. A Liberator, it was announced on Dec. 5, 1943, accounted for this one, which lay half-submerged long enough for its crew to inflate their rubber dinghies. *Photo, British Official*

U.S. Naval Task Force Aids British Home Fleet

NAVAL COOPERATION OF BRITAIN AND AMERICA is demonstrated in the top photograph, where destroyers of the U.S. task force in company with British destroyers form a protective screen for battleships. Below, Bofors guns of an American battleship go into action. Inset, Adm. Stark (right), commander of U.S. naval forces in Europe, and Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty (left), inspect a guard of honour at a Northern base where they recently visited units of the U.S. Fleet now operating with the Royal Navy.

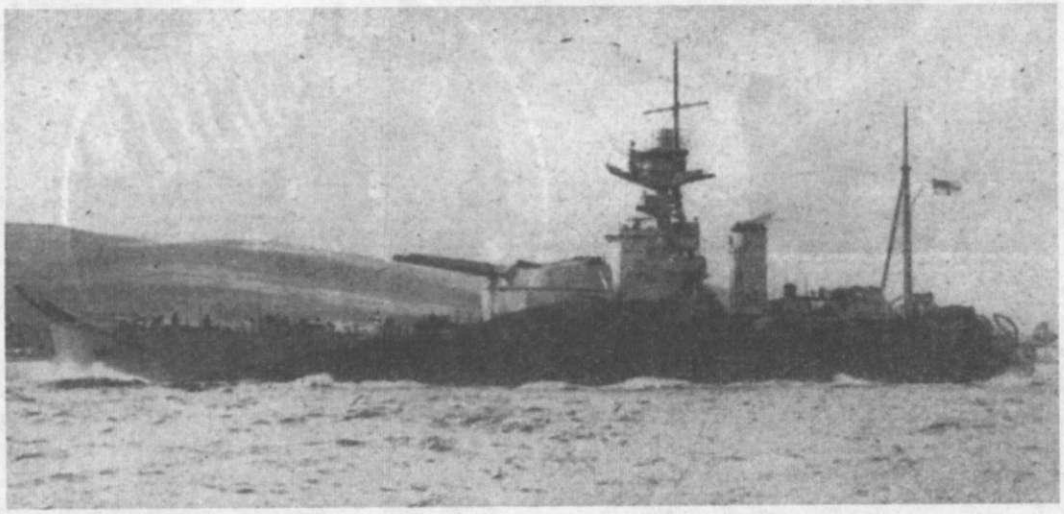
Photos, British Official

Our Monitors Help the Land Fighting in Italy

Seldom in the news, but doing a magnificent and highly important job, the Navy's monitors are specialized warships with a single purpose the smashing of land targets. How these vessels, armed with 15-in. and smaller guns but not equipped to fight other warships, carry out their great task is described by ALEXANDER DILKE.

IN the Italian campaign monitors have come into their own. Geography dictated that much of the fighting should take place on the coastal plains; where that is the case, monitors are able to bring their 15-in. guns to bear on vital targets in the enemy lines and well behind them. How many of these specialized warships are now engaged must remain a secret. The only name which may be mentioned at present is H.M.S. Roberts.

But it is no secret to the Germans that the devastating shells from the batteries of these ships played a decisive part in the critical battle of Salerno when the whole fate of the Italian invasion hung in the balance. While the guns of the destroyers steaming close to the shore engaged the German tanks trying to sally out of the ravines, the heavier guns of the monitors and battleships were ranged on the German heavy batteries farther inland, and on German communications and similar targets. Wherever the fighting goes in the "leg" of Italy, the monitors will find targets. There is no other part of Europe where this type of warship could be used over such a long period.



H.M.S. ROBERTS, renowned British monitor referred to in this page, whose guns played a decisive part in smashing rail and road communications in Sicily and destroying enemy coastal batteries on the Italian mainland. Her two formidable guns are here seen in their forward turret, a feature which characterizes the monitor's design. The Roberts has distinguished herself in many daring operations in the Mediterranean. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

THE monitor is a specialized warship with a single purpose—the bombardment of shore targets. It is not equipped to fight other warships, and Allied naval supremacy is a condition for it going into action. It is defensively armed, and able to take punishment, but otherwise everything is subordinated to the two great guns in a forward turret which are characteristic of its design. Its shallow draught enables it to approach closer to the shore than a battleship with a comparable armament, and its guns are mounted so that they can fire at a high angle, with a maximum range of 40,000 yards. At the long ranges the shell plunges on its target almost vertically, doing greater destruction to land targets than a shell fired at a low elevation, and having a more demoralizing effect, since the shell gives no audible warning of its approach.

Of the ability of the monitor, with its extensive torpedo bulges, to take punishment, the case of H.M.S. Terror is the classic. When bombarding German positions on the Belgian Coast in the last war she was hit by three torpedoes simultaneously. She reached port, and was back again in a few weeks bombarding the same targets. The Germans had to wait nearly 25 years to get her. She was sunk in February 1941 off the North African coast, but only after three bombs and two mines had broken her back.

H.M.S. TERROR played a considerable part in the first Libyan campaign, where she was part of the "Inshore Squadron" to which General Wavell alloted such a generous share of the victory. When war broke out she was in the Far East, but was brought to the Mediterranean. Her first task was one very much out of the line of a monitor—anti-aircraft defence of Malta in the first weeks of the war with Italy, when no other defence was possible. She survived further bombardments in Suda Bay, was attacked by E-boats while bombarding Sidi Barrani in the opening stages of the campaign, and then incessantly attacked from the air.

But the Germans did not get her until she had poured hundreds of rounds into vital targets behind the enemy lines, playing a big part in turning defeat into rout. Whenever the enemy showed signs of stubborn resistance along the coastal road, as at Bardia and Tobruk, the guns of the Terror ranged on them and helped them to change their mind.

Enemy aircraft made such a dead-set for her that, in the absence of an air "umbrella," her end at some time was almost inevitable. It came through a near-miss from a bomb off Benghazi. She tried to make Tobruk, but two mines flooded more compartments, and another near-miss flooded her engine compartment and she had to be abandoned. Thus ended a great career, in which her guns had pumped hundreds of tons of high explosive on the enemy in two wars.

The work of H.M.S. Roberts in recent months has been equally devastating. She followed the enemy all the way up the east coast of Sicily, remaining in action for ten weeks, with only two days on which the crews were not closed up at action stations. Her most spectacular feat, perhaps, was blocking the road at Taormina. A few well-directed shells started a landslide of rock which completely blocked the road and railway in the enemy's rear. On another occasion a single shell completely destroyed a chemical factory, and a salvo on Spaccaformo, twelve miles inland, was sufficient to force the garrison, which had been putting up a hot resistance, to surrender. There were many instances of enemy batteries being put out of action or coming out to surrender after one or two near misses.

Monitors are equipped with elaborate ranging apparatus, but wireless and the new style of amphibious operations have opened up fresh possibilities to them. In Italy they have been working with the aid of observers on the land as well as with "spotting planes." They are thus able to fire at targets completely out of sight with great accuracy, and even to fire through a smoke-screen.

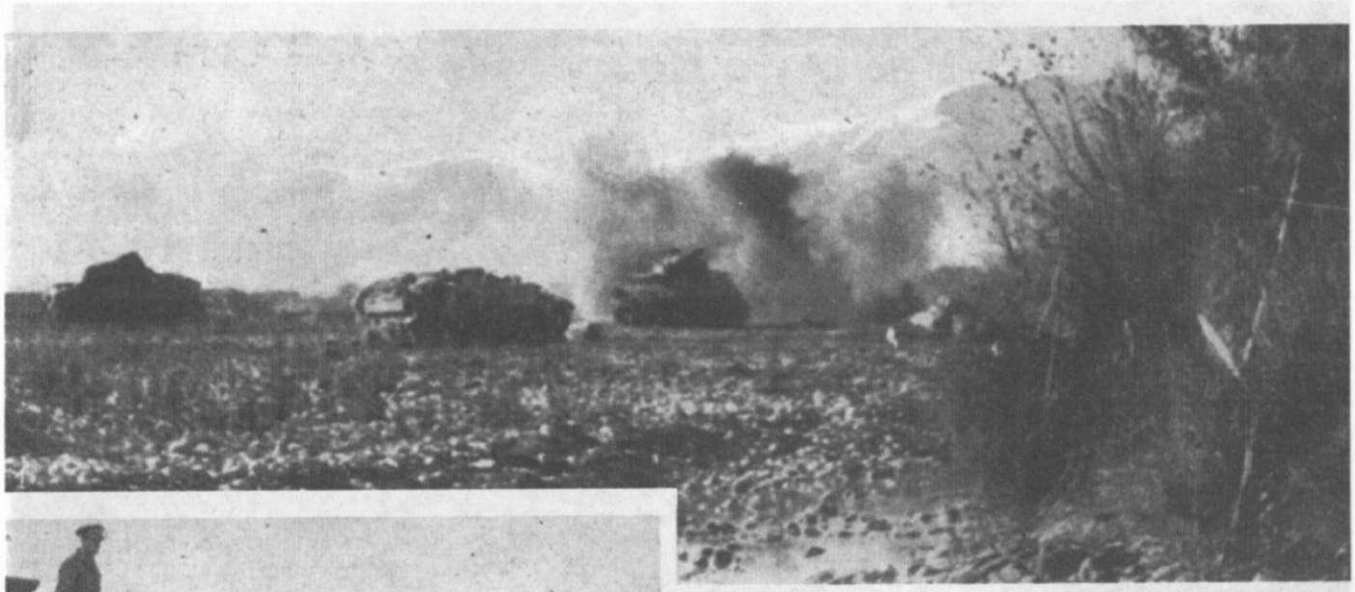
At the opening of the present war, as at the beginning of the last, the Royal Navy was poorly provided with monitors. In 1914 Britain had no true monitors, but, chiefly under the inspiration of Lord Fisher, sixteen were built in record time, of which H.M.S. Terror and H.M.S. Erebus became the most famous. The latter, incidentally, survived a devastating blow amidships by a small boat laden with high explosive. Four were sunk in operations, and all the rest but three were scrapped during the period of disarmament. Of these three, one became the hulk Drake, at Plymouth, her guns being mounted on H.M.S. Erebus.

THOSE scrapped monitors would be worth almost their weight in gold in the amphibious warfare we are now undertaking, but their places have been taken by new vessels to an extent which must remain secret. One of the difficulties in building monitors is that the huge guns with their accompanying ranging apparatus cannot be produced in a day or even a few weeks. It is a lengthy and highly specialized job for which only a few establishments are equipped.

A monitor has a remarkably shallow draught—perhaps 11 feet, compared with 27-28 feet of a battleship carrying comparable guns. Her armour is generally limited to about 4 inches, with heavier armour on the gunhouse. The Royal Navy is now the only one to possess monitors. This is in accordance with a long tradition of amphibious warfare. The monitor as a type dates back to the 17th century, but the name itself comes from the famous "Monitor" built by Ericsson for the Federals in the U.S. Civil War.

THE duel between the Monitor, which was virtually a floating 11-in. gun battery, heavily armoured, and the Merrimac, built by the Confederates, is a classic of naval history. It was indecisive, in a sense, since neither ship was sunk, but it established the turret mounting of heavy guns and led to the construction of "monitors" along very different lines from those of the "bomb ketches" of the 17th century. The United States did not continue the construction of monitors after the 1914-18 war, presumably not envisaging amphibious warfare under conditions when they would be effective—as now.

Monty's Men Push on Along the Road to Rome



DRIVE BEYOND THE SANGRO enabled the 8th Army to reach the outskirts of Ortona and Orsogna by Dec. 22, 1943 (see p. 483). 1, German mortar bombs burst among Sherman tanks, Bren carriers and anti-tank guns. 2, Gen. Montgomery passes a bogged Sherman tank and hands out cigarettes. 3, Indian troops escort a batch of German prisoners. 4, British infantry climb a steep rugged slope. 5, Bren gun group in a hillside slit trench picks off its Nazi targets.

Photos, British Official

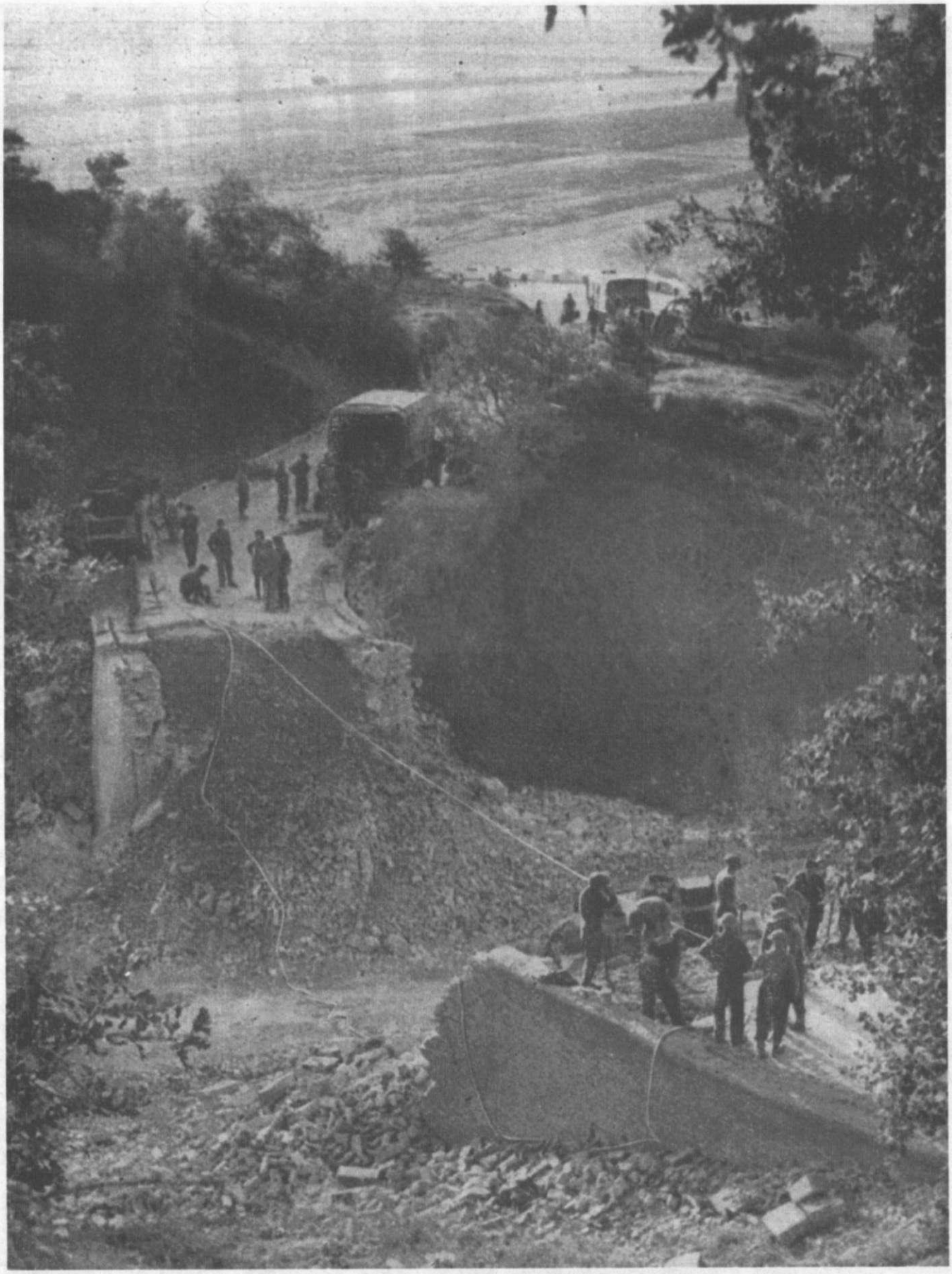
Fire Mud and Snow Fail to Stop Our Advance

MOUNTAIN VILLAGES BLAZE as the Germans, forced from their defensive line across Italy, from the Sangro to the Garigliano, adopt a "scorched earth" policy. During mid-November 1943 the 5th and 8th Armies captured several of these villages in a series of progressive pushes, and the above drawing shows a night scene on the road to Alfedena (announced captured by the 8th on Nov. 24). In the middle distance the townlet of Rionero burns; the sky and the intervening valleys are lit up by fires in other villages as the Allies advance from the south.

WINTER'S APPROACH IN THE APENNINES inevitably slowed down Allied progress; yet despite difficult conditions successes in some mountain districts were scored along the line occupied by the 5th and 8th Armies. Monte Meta, 6,700 ft. high (see map, page 483), here towers in the background. Snow and rain have churned the precipitous track into a morass over which slither tanks and pack-mules in their long, arduous ascent. Many tracks deteriorated into creeks of deep mud.

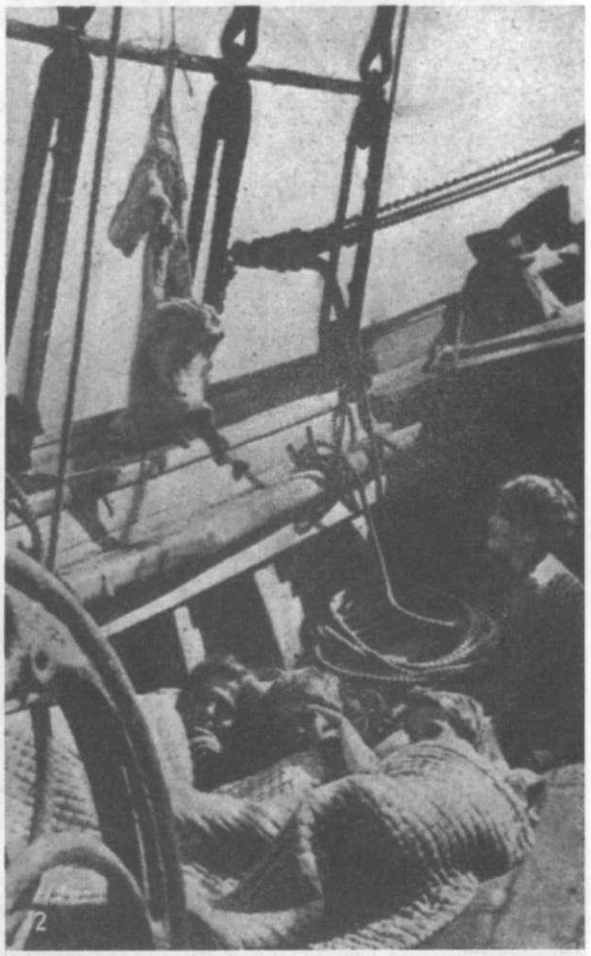
Drawings by E. G. Lambert and W. G. Whitaker, by courtesy of The Sphere

Colossal Task for R.E.s of the 8th Army in Italy



MASTERS OF DEMOLITION, the retreating Germans blew up this important Italian road bridge N.W. of Vasto, captured by the 8th Army on Nov. 5, 1943. Royal Engineers are shown repairing the huge gap in order that supply lines to our forward troops can be maintained. Vasto is a small port between Termoli and Pescara on the Adriatic coast: its capture was followed by further successful attacks by the 8th Army, enabling the latter to command the road S.W. from that town to Castiglione, the fall of which was announced on Nov. 13. PAGE 491 *Photo, British Official*

Dodecanese Islanders Gain Sanctuary in Egypt

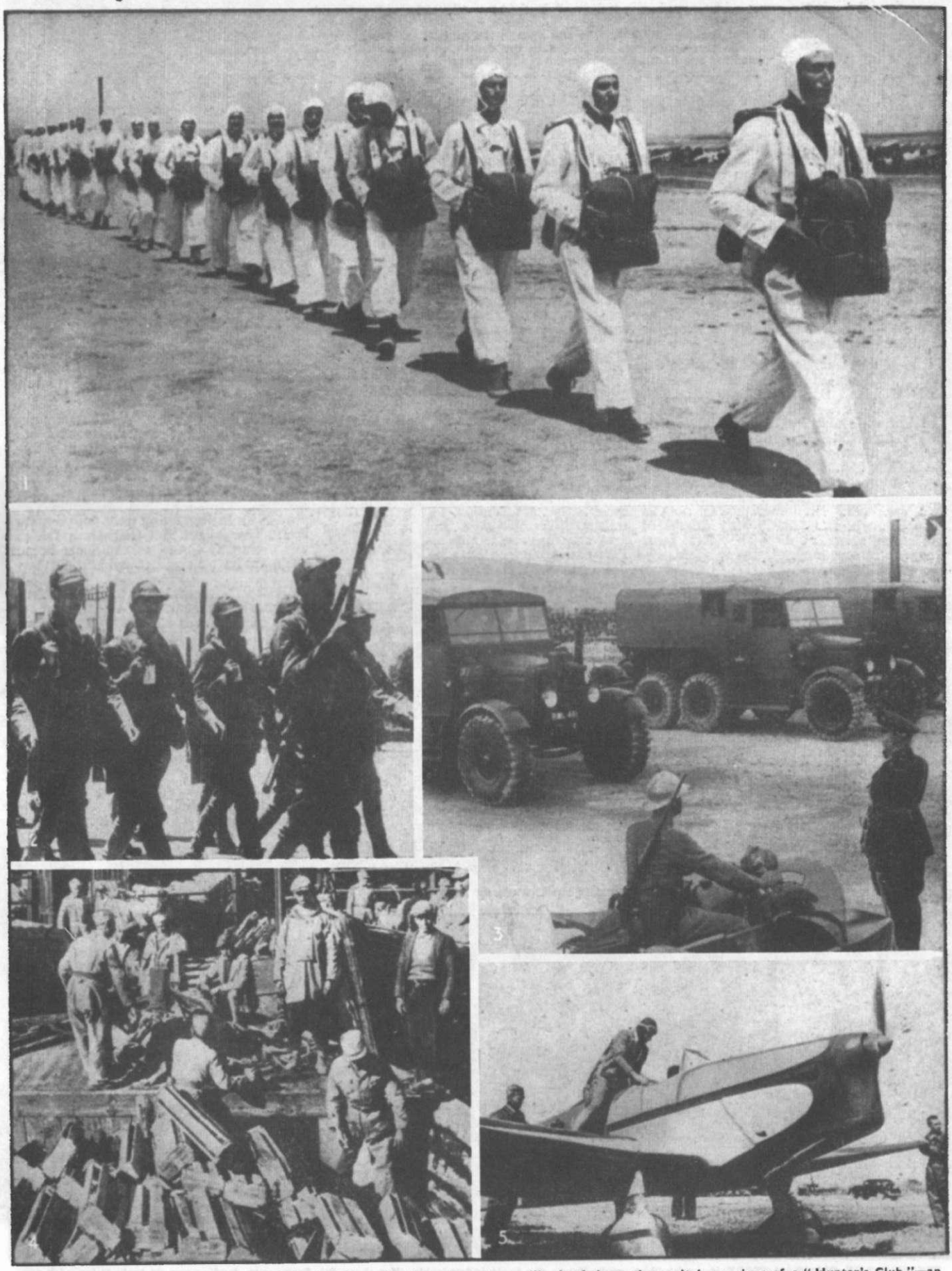


GREEK REFUGEES, plunged into the front line of war and driven from their homes with the fall of the islands of Cos, Samos, and Leros in the Dodecanese (see illus. p. 468), escaped in what small craft they could find. Many waited on rocks off their island-coasts until Allied ships could give them passage to freedom and safety.

A party of refugees crowds aboard a rescue ship (1), and starving members of a Greek family look forward to a meat meal as they rest on deck (2). Another family (3) resolutely faces the future as father, mother and child arrive at a temporary camp in Egypt, where food, clothing, and medical supplies are distributed by the U.S. Red Cross and the British-operated Middle East Refugee Relief Association ; a substantial meal is in progress (4).

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright; U.S. Official

Turkey Affirms Her Friendship with the Allies



READY FOR ACTION, if required, are Turkey's highly trained parachute troops (1). In Ankara, the capital, members of a "Hunter's Club"—an organization that popularizes hunting in Turkey and now trains its members for Home Guard duties—are on the march (2), and mechanized troops and transport are assembled (3). Soldiers unpack bombs delivered under Lease-Lend from U.S.A.; they are being reloaded (4) into freight-cars at Iskenderun (Alexandretta) for shipment to air bases. A Turkish "Magister" training plane about to be tested (5). *Photos, Sport & General, Keystone*

Praise the Men Who Pass the Ammunition

Victory demands not only men and guns in the correct place and at the right time, but adequate supplies of ammunition, which dictate the course of battles. DONALD COWIE explains the difficulties and narrates the triumphs of those whose task it is, under front line fire, on communication lines, on the High Seas, on the home front, to keep well fed our insatiable guns.

WHO saved Egypt—and possibly the world—in the summer of 1942? Some say General Auchinleck and some the South Africans; others argue about Sherman tanks and 25-pounder guns. No one mentions the ammunition men of the Eighth Army. No one ever does . . .

But consider how our retreating remnants stopped at last to dig themselves in at El Alamein. Only a screen of a few 25-pounder guns held the rocky line as the wearied troops sorted themselves out. Rommel's tanks continually pressed forward; our guns just contrived to hold them at bay. Then it was revealed that ammunition was very nearly exhausted and the nearest dumps were far off in the Nile Valley.

Part of that last supply was rushed to the railway, transported to a section of the track near Alamein, transferred into R.A.S.C. lorries, and then—Axis bombers came over. The Luftwaffe and Regia Aeronautica had always appreciated a sitting target. Those lethal-laden lorries were straddled again and again with bombs as they lurched forward across the rocks and the rubble. Meanwhile, our distant gunners were anxiously handling their last shells. Even more urgent S O Ss came through, and the Cockney drivers of the lorries swore as dispatch riders came alongside on motor-cycles, urging speed.

A DIVE-BOMBER swooped, and both lorry and motor-cycle disappeared in a flash of flame. A load of ammunition is easily destroyed. Yet the convoy went on, swerving to avoid the burning hulks of its more unfortunate vehicles. Now, over to the guns.

The gunners knew they could not last much longer. Always they turned to look for the delayed supplies. The view was obliterated by dust and smoke. Then a little convoy of vehicles emerged from the inferno, driving at high speed over the rough ground. Some of them had partly-smashed cabs, and many had Bren guns spitting against the sky. One was actually on fire as it plunged ahead. This was a real case of running the gauntlet, especially as Rommel's own field guns now had the range of the ground over which the lorries were travelling.

But the foremost vehicles were already disgorging grim men with cases of shells in their arms. The men were running to the guns, which, replenished, drove back the nearest German tanks, and began to silence the German batteries. Egypt was saved. And who had been responsible?

That story was worth telling in detail because it epitomizes many similar cases in this war when all depended upon the gallantry of a body of men who have received less than their due in publicity. Once workers of this kind on the communication lines had a relatively soft job. But under modern conditions the ammunition bearers not only play a vitally important part, they often have to take risks which the most seasoned front line troops would be loath to face.

THE point is that while more ammunition than ever is needed by the multifarious engines of war of today—guns, automatic arms, tanks, armoured cars—the speed of spearheads makes it necessary for the "ammo men" to be equally mobile and ready to expose themselves.

Admittedly there has been a great development in methods whereby the guns, tanks and forward troops can carry a certain amount of their own ammunition. Caissons, those trailers behind the guns, run on pneumatic tires and the whole outfit is self-propelled. Every available inch of space within tanks is decorated with clips of big shells, mortar bombs, smoke candles, and small-arms cartridges for machine-guns and rifles. When the "tankee" takes a nap within his mobile fortress a rack of shells hangs above his head. The forward troops twist belts of ammunition round their bodies like snakes.

Now consider how many rounds are fired in the shortest battle. The machine-gun or quick-firing principle has revolutionized firepower. In five minutes the Bren gun will exhaust the .303 ammunition supply of 750 riflemen. For six hours' intensive bombardment per mile of front in the last war British guns required 67,700 shells. But modern artillery fires much faster, and it can rarely be reached by permanent, well-protected communication lines.

From the anchored supply ships off the Sicilian shore to the open beaches of the invasion's beginning, a chain of men continually stood waist-deep in the water. They were passing shells from hand to hand. As it happened they had to suffer little more than muscle-strain, but they *might* have had to do that job under fire.

Which introduces yet another aspect of this work, unknown to the general public. Ammunition is abnormally sensitive, not only to bombs but also to atmospheric conditions. "Keep your powder dry" has been the wise commander's cry throughout the ages. This is sufficient of a problem for the "ammo men" in hastily-constructed dumps.

Continual greasing of the shells and small-arms belts, careful attention to waterproofing of roofs and fixing of tarpaulins are principal methods. But imagine the worry of safeguarding those temperamental cargoes during combined operations or forward pushes in bad weather, or when supplies have to be brought up under fire to the front line.

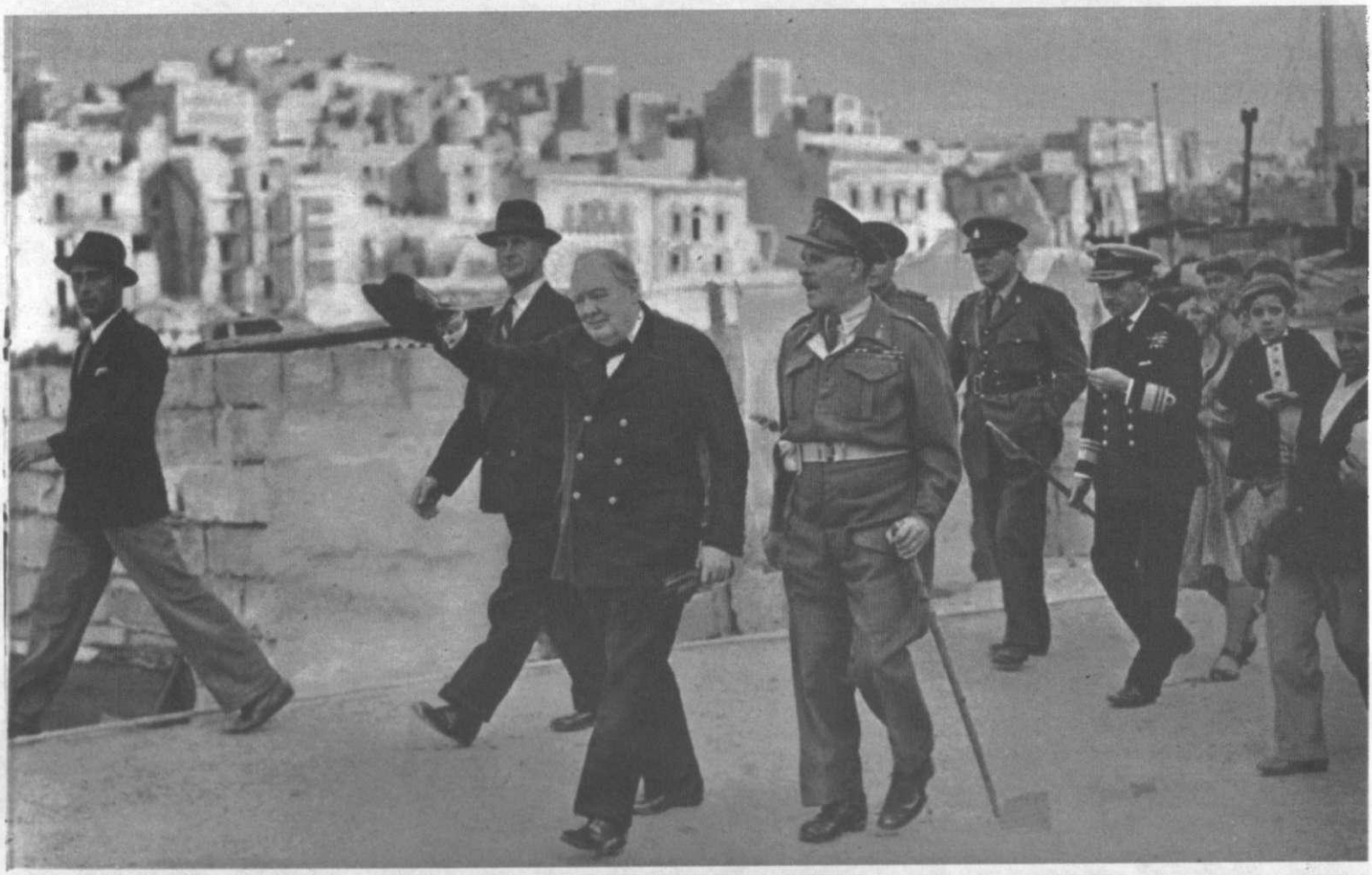
Here is another example of how ammunition supply dictates the course of battles. Dumps of shells for the B.E.F. in 1939-40 had been prepared behind their lines, but within a few days after the German invasion these were behind the *German* lines. It was quite impossible with our resources then to provide all the retreating units with ammunition. The gallant 51st (Highland) Division was eventually forced to capitulate because it did not have a single round left.

IT is now the enemy's turn to be parted fatally from his ammunition. We captured hundreds of thousands of rounds from the Germans and Italians in North Africa and Sicily. Afterwards it was the "ammo men's" Herculean task to collect and make an inventory of this booty, assigning part of it to arms factories for breaking down and re-manufacture, and the other part for use in captured guns and small arms.

And one should not forget the railwaymen of countless British sidings, junctions and stations during air raids, the seamen on innumerable shell-laden ships sailing through U-boat and aerial attacks, the munition workers themselves at dangerous factories, all risking their lives that the guns may not be idle. They are the third line, as the R.A.S.C. men are the second, of those who know that it is good to praise the Lord but essential also to pass the ammunition.

FEEDING THE GUNS IN ITALY is a task that might daunt the most indomitable. Yet these 8th Army men, leading a mule train laden with ammunition, can find time to grin as they pass a Sherman tank being dug out of the mud as men and animals move towards forward positions on the Sangro River front. Hazards and difficulties engendered by the enemy and the weather in Italy are further exemplified in illustrations in pp. 490-491. See also story in p. 505.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright



Photos, British Official Crown Copyright

King George's Sword for Russia's Man of Steel

Highlight of the Teheran Conference was the presentation in the Soviet Embassy of the Sword of Stalingrad by Mr. Churchill (on behalf of H.M. the King) to Marshal Stalin. Facing the Sword, in its case on the table (below), the two great leaders salute during the playing of their national anthems. On his way to the Cairo Conference, which preceded the Teheran meeting, Mr. Churchill called at Malta, where he is seen (top) with Field-Marshal Lord Gort, Governor of the Island.

'Our Nations Shall Work Together in War and Peace'

In Persia's capital, Teheran, there met for the first time the leaders of the three greatest nations. Nov. 28, 1943, also marked the occasion of the st meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin. Above, President and the two Premiers are seated on the steps of the Soviet Legation. Behind, left to right, are Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, Marshal Voroshilov, General Sir Alan Brooke and Admiral Leahy. In every corner of the world will be felt the consequences of this meeting, at which it was declared " have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces." The conferences were summed up by Field-Marshal Smuts as " the most significant gatherings a hundred years."

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Many Happy Returns!

Our indefatigable Premier celebrated, and had celebrated for him, his 69th birthday during the conference in Teheran. Numerous gifts included a specially made hat (top) presented to him on behalf of representatives of the British Press. Below, Mr. Churchill is greeted by the Shah of Persia.

Chungking Comes to Cairo

The complete defeat of Japan was planned at the first Cairo Conference. While in Africa, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, accompanied by his charming and talented wife, found time for a short sightseeing tour of the city. Accompanied by Sir Robert Greg, K.C.M.G., they are seen (top) leaving the Ibn Tulûn Mosque, and (below) hand-in-hand they survey enthralled from the high vantage point of the Mehemet Ali Mosque places of interest pointed out by Sir Robert, who knows Cario as the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek know their own native cities. See article in facing page.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Friends in Fact, in Spirit and in Purpose

Momentous decisions, of which no man can yet grasp the real magnitude or gauge the final consequences, were taken when Allied leaders met in a series of conferences commencing November 22, 1943, to plan next steps in the prosecution of the war. A brief background outline is given here by E. ROYSTON PIKE. See illus. pages 495-498.

SOMEWHERE in North Africa—later it was revealed that the scene was the Egyptian desert hard by the Pyramids at Gizeh—the supreme heads of the great democracies of Britain, the United States and China met to discuss and plan the military ruin of Germany and Germany's oriental jackal, Japan.

First to arrive and pass through the heavily-guarded, barbed-wire barriers into the enclosure dotted with the villas of the meeting-place was the valiant Chiang Kai-shek, generalissimo of Free China. He flew from Chungking in four days, reaching Cairo on November 21, and with him was his wife to act as his interpreter and guide in a strange new world.

"Madame" was a charming figure, in her long black Chinese dress, slit at the sides, her black high-necked mandarin coat, green jade earrings and light straw hat; while as for her husband, he was the man whom everybody wanted to see and greet, so that, as the correspondents put it, China "stole the show." When the official photographs were taken, Mr. Churchill (who went by sea, accompanied by his daughter Mrs. Sarah Oliver, arriving also on November 21) invited Marshal Chiang to "Come and have the seat of honour. This is your conference!" With true Chinese courtesy the Marshal declined, and sat on one side of President Roosevelt (who arrived by air on November 22), with Mr. Churchill on the other.

THREE GREAT LEADERS CONFER AT CAIRO. This radio photograph shows President Inönü of Turkey seated between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill outside the house where the Premier stayed during the third Three-Power Conference, held near Cairo on Dec. 4-6, 1943. Behind the Prime Minister stand Mr. Eden and Sir Knatchbull-Hugessen, British Ambassador in Ankara.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

FOR five days the statesmen were in conference, while the British, American and Chinese Chiefs of Staff and the numerous advisers who had accompanied the world leaders conferred as to the steps that would bring the enemy peoples to their knees. The talks ended on November 26, but it was not until 12.30 a.m. on December 2 that a special communiqué was published, telling the world of the conference and its momentous decisions. "The three great Allies," it read, "expressed their resolve to bring unrelenting pressure against their brutal enemies by sea, land and air. The pressure is already rising . . ." Then came passages which must have caused unease in Tokyo. Japan, it was declared, is to be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific she has occupied since 1914, of all the territories she has stolen from the Chinese—Manchuria, Formosa, Korea . . .

When this "Pacific Charter," as it has been called, was issued, Marshal Chiang was back in Chungking and Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt were just concluding a visit to Teheran, whither they had repaired on the conclusion of the Cairo meetings.

It was on Saturday afternoon, November 27, that the President and the Premier touched down in Teheran, having made the journey with their staffs non-stop in ten large passenger transport planes. An interesting detail—another was that the two great ones had paid a visit to the Pyramids and listened perforce to a dragoman's 15-minute description of the Sphinx—was that the President's plane made a detour over Jerusalem so that he might catch a glimpse of the Holy City.

At Teheran they found the master of a sixth, the Socialist sixth, of the world waiting to hail them. Marshal Stalin had arrived by plane from Moscow the preceding day, and had taken up his residence in the grounds of the Russian Embassy, converted (together with its not distant neighbour, the British Legation) into a fortress-like area, ringed with cordons of troops, police, and G.P.U. agents.

Stepping from their planes, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had their first sight of the Red Army in the very personable guard of honour lined up at the Teheran airport. Sir Reader Bullard, the British Minister, and Gen. Selby, Acting G.O.C. Persia-Iraq Force, met Mr. Churchill and drove him to the British Legation. The President similarly went to the residence of Mr. Louis Dreyfus, the U.S. Minister, for the night; but the next day (Sunday) he accepted the personal invitation extended to him by Marshal Stalin to make the Soviet Embassy his headquarters. Hardly had he arrived there when the Marshal, dressed in the beige-coloured uniform of a Marshal of the Soviet Union, with the ribbon and star of a Hero of the Soviet Union on his breast, walked down the garden path from his villa and visited the President in the free-and-easy fashion of one calling upon a friend and neighbour. After an hour and a half of conversation, the two were joined by Mr. Churchill. Soon the conference had begun in real earnest and, with the staff talks, it continued throughout Monday and Tuesday with hardly a break.

On the Monday afternoon there was an impressive little ceremony in the conference room of the Russian Embassy when Marshal Stalin accepted from the hands of Mr. Churchill the Sword given by the King to "the steel-hearted citizens of Stalingrad." As the Marshal received it, he solemnly kissed the naked blade and then passed it to Marshal Voroshilov, who in turn handed it to a young lieutenant to hold and guard. Then after the President had handled it, too, and read the inscription—"Truly, a heart of steel," was his comment—the Sword was proudly borne out, and those within heard the ringing words of command as the guards presented arms in homage.

THE next day (Nov. 30) was Mr. Churchill's 69th birthday, and he was the proud recipient of a number of gifts, while in the evening there was a dinner party at the British Legation, at which the Premier was host and President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin were the guests of honour. Of the thirty-four present, only one was a woman—Mrs. Oliver. In the middle of the table was the birthday cake—not very large, but bearing a prominent "V" and surmounted by 69 candles.

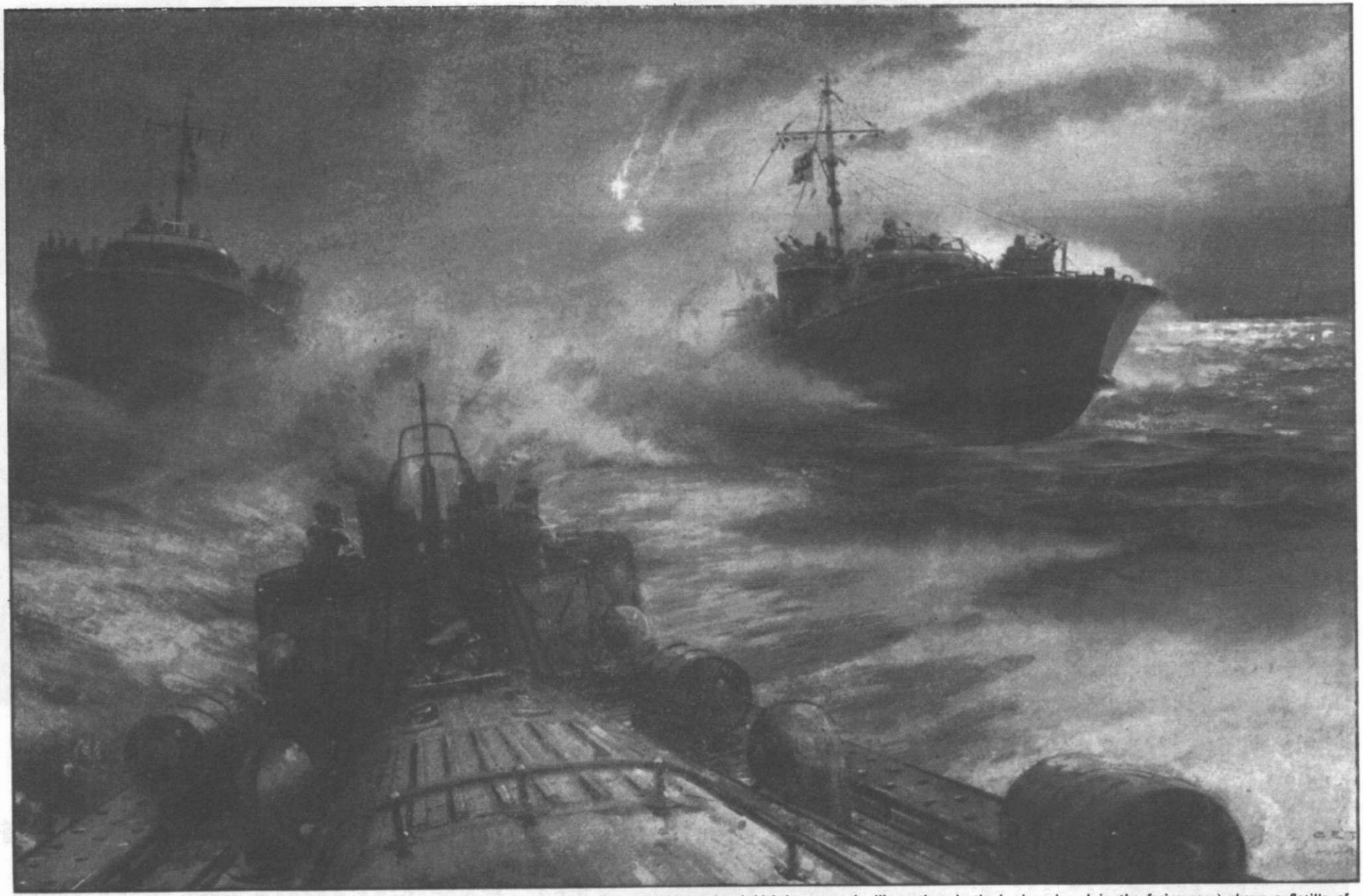
The proceedings were described as gay and cordial. Marshal Stalin, we are told, was the life and soul of the party, rising to every toast, moving about the room to clink glasses with the person toasted, and in speech after speech expressing his friendship for the President and the Premier. "Roosevelt the Man," proposed Mr. Churchill. "My fighting friend," gave Mr. Stalin, turning to the Premier; and "Stalin the Great" was the happy Churchillian response.

Wednesday, December 1, was the last day of the conference, and after the final session the three leaders sat down to put their signatures to the Declaration of the Three Powers.

"Our Nations shall work together in war and in the peace that will follow," ran one sentence. "We have concerted our plans for the destruction of the German forces" was another. "No power on earth can prevent our destroying the German armies by land, their U-boats by sea, and their war plants from the air. Our attacks will be relentless and increasing." And so to the conclusion: "From these friendly conferences we look with confidence to the day when all peoples of the world may live free lives untouched by tyranny and according to their varying desires and their own consciences. We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose."

After President Roosevelt had visited the American troops at Amirabad, and Mr. Churchill had reviewed some units of "Paiforce," the conference broke up. Marshal Stalin returned to Moscow, and the President and Premier flew back to Cairo.

Here they engaged in another series of talks, this time with President Inönü of Turkey and his Foreign Minister, M. Menemenjoglu (see illus. in p. 511). The communiqué issued after their conference stated that "the study of all problems in a spirit of understanding and loyalty showed that the closest unity existed between the U.S.A., Turkey and Great Britain in their attitude to the world situation." Another participant in these talks was Field Marshal Smuts, who called at Cairo on his return journey to South Africa from London; and it was he who most fittingly summed up the conferences as "the most significant gatherings for a hundred years," a sign and indication that the greatest Powers in the world are now "absolutely undivided for final victory."



BRITAIN'S GREAT 'LITTLE SHIPS' on night patrol sight a convoy in the North Sea. This graphic drawing (which is among the illustrations in the book reviewed in the facing page) shows a flotilla of motor gunboats of the Nore Command at a dramatic moment. On the extreme right a convoy is seen faintly outlined in the moonlight as it returns to its base just before dawn. The gun crews of the M.G.B.s man their weapons, captains and coxswains stand by alert while recognition signals are exchanged. All is well, and the ships pass on their respective courses. On Oct. 24-25, 1943, some 30 German E-boats attempting to attack a convoy off the East Coast were driven off with loss by M.G.B.s.

Drawn by C. E. Turner; by courtesy of The Illustrated London News

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

Fighting Midgets of the Great Waters

"LIGHT Coastal Forces." We have heard much of them lately. They have been doing grand work. Though manned almost entirely by crews drawn from factories, offices, shop counters, warehouses, "the professional skill of both officers and men has maintained the great tradition built up by many generations of British seamen," to quote the Prime Minister's words of some six months ago.

They must not be confused with Coastal Command, which is an aircraft force. The two often work together. Indeed, some of the most highly successful operations against U-boats have been the result of their united efforts. But they have no permanent connexion, and it is a pity their titles are so much alike, causing many people to get them mixed up.

In his most readable and informative book, The Little Ships (Hodder & Stoughton, 7s. 6d.), Mr. Gordon Holman explains the nature of the three main types of vessels included in Coastal Forces. First, there are the M.G.B.s—the motor-gunboats—which have been called the Spitfires of the sea. All ships of war are uncomfortable. At least, that is my experience; but the M.G.B.s are apparently like sardine tins for discomfort. "The head-space in the engine-room does not permit even a short man to stand upright, and there is hardly room to set one's feet to do any standing." In order to watch over "the enormous horse-power in his charge the all-important engineer must sit astride part of the driving system. When an adjustment or emergency repair is called for, he may have to lie down at full length to reach the affected part."

EVERYTHING else is on the same miniature scale. "Quite apart from the fighting, a considerable measure of hardship must be faced in living in these conditions over any extended period at sea." A senior officer said that "after 48 hours of a good doing on a longish trip you feel pretty stiff. I have never tried to ride across country for 48 hours, but I have done it for a shorter time. If you can imagine the Grand National going on for 48 hours, that would be rather like the strain you have to stand up to in these vessels."

The violence with which they plunge and roll and jump about requires in their crews "a particular quality of stomach." Men are often hurt badly by being thrown about. A First Lieutenant after going below one morning was absent for a very long time. Search was made and he was found lying stunned "and looking the most horrible green colour" in the wardroom. The boat had hit an extra large sea and tossed him over. Another was flung down so heavily that he sprained both ankles.

You would hardly think it could be possible, but space in the second kind of Coastal Force ship, the motor-torpedo-boat, is even more limited than in motor-gunboats. "The wardroom in some is so small that one long seat is provided, and the appearance is similar to that of the odd railway compartment that has one row of seats facing a book or parcel ledge." Tedious are the many days and nights of searching for the enemy; they may go on for weeks, even months, with scarcely an incident to break the monotony. But the excitement when an enemy ship is first sighted makes up for all that. Sometimes action follows instantly; at other times the victim has to be stalked with the greatest patience. So cleverly is this stalking performed that there have been occasions when Nazi ships have been sunk by torpedo without knowing what hit them, probably imagining they had struck a mine.

THIRDLY come the motor-launches, which are built in Canada, Australia, South Africa and India, as well as in Britain, on what is inelegantly called the "pre-fabrication" system, which means that separate parts can be shipped to any port and the vessels assembled there. "Launches" does not describe them at all. They are fine sea boats, average about 110 feet in length, and have petrol engines. They escort convoys hugging our coasts, they keep off E-boat attacks, they lay mines off enemy coasts. They may be called on to join in such desperate adventures as the destruction of the lock gates at St. Nazaire. Of this exploit Mr. Holman gives a vivid eye-witness account.

It was a grand success so far as doing what had to be done was concerned, but the losses were so heavy that I can't help wondering if the damage to the U-boat lair in the French port right up the River Loire was really worth what we suffered. I certainly did not realize until I read this story of the exploit, in which Mr. Holman shared, what it meant to run up the river lined on each bank with German batteries.

ONE young seaman had told his mother, who was worried about him, "because I am the only one," that he had got "a nice, safe job," keeping near the coast, so she felt he was fairly secure. But he had been twice torpedoed ("a whacking great explosion and then you start swimming," he described it), and at St. Nazaire he was wounded. But he was not in the least downhearted and declared that his luck had held, for "with all that going on," not to be killed was "the best bit of luck of all." That is the spirit of the men in the motor-launches, Mr. Holman assures us.

We have had luck too—in getting time to organize the Coastal Forces so as to give the Germans a surprise when they found out that our slackness before the war had been compensated by rapid action. "I shall not be popular if I say that we had been caught mildly napping," says Mr. Holman cautiously. He might have given his statement much more emphasis.

At the beginning of the war "the enemy enjoyed undoubted supremacy in the field of light craft." The value of such craft and the urgent need for them were not grasped. "I have it on very good authority that officers of accepted capacity in important commands asked 'What the hell are all these motor-boat flotillas being formed for?'" In the course of a few weeks, "or months at the most, they were asking, 'Why the hell cannot we have more of these Coastal Forces flotillas?'"

Admirals were, some of them, inclined to rate the Little Ships as foolishly as did the high-up army general who was conducting manoeuvres some time *after* Dunkirk and, when Mr. Holman asked him about air reconnaissance, replied, "Oh, yes, they've put some planes at my disposal, but weather and all sorts of things can upset those fellows in the air, so I prefer to rely on my own ground reconnaissance."

THAT sort of stupidity is less common in the Navy, Mr. Holman thinks, than it is in the Army—or was, let us hope, before men like Gen. Montgomery began telling the War Office and the General Staff what warfare today is really like. But even the Navy "is too steeped in tradition to step out briskly after new and untried things."

Happily, there are brains at the Admiralty and among our admirals, and once these had been convinced of the vastly important part the Little Ships had to play in the war, the building of them and the training of their crews proceeded with great speed. The results could scarcely have been better.

It is worth noting that like the Dominions and Colonies, our Allies are making a substantial contribution to the manning of the Little Ships fleet.

IN THE WARDROOM OF A MOTOR-GUNBOAT. Despite cramped conditions it contains a cushioned settee, folding table and sleeping berth. These light craft that guard our waterways are dealt with vividly in the book, The Little Ships, reviewed in this page. Another illustration from the book is in facing page.

Drawn by C. E. Turner; by courtesy of The Illustrated London News

New Zealanders Land to Battle in the Solomons

OFF VELLA LAVELLA, northernmost island of the Central Solomons group (see also illus. page 455), New Zealand landing-craft (left) make for the shore. Empty craft are seen returning to the transports for more men; a very efficient shuttle service between the ships and the island beaches was maintained. This landing was achieved on Sept. 17, 1943.

MAJ.-GEN. C. E. BARROW-CLOUGH (below, left), commanding New Zealand troops in the S. Pacific, in conversation with Col. E. E. Brown. The latter is in command of the U.S. infantry whom the New Zealanders reinforced. The island was invaded by the Americans on Aug. 15.

CAMOUFLAGED for jungle warfare this New Zealander (above) leaps ashore with a heavy load of kit. He and his comrades played a great part in the taking of the island. Hours after our troops had landed enemy aircraft came over but were intercepted before they could attack the ships. The Vella Lavella victory loosened Japanese hold not only on the Solomons and New Guinea but also on the Netherlands East Indies.

READY TO ATTACK, New Zealanders disembark (right) from their craft upon the densely wooded beach at Baka Baka on Vella Lavella. By Oct. 9 the island had been finally evacuated by the enemy after weeks of some of the bitterest fighting that had yet taken place in the Pacific.

Photos, Central Press

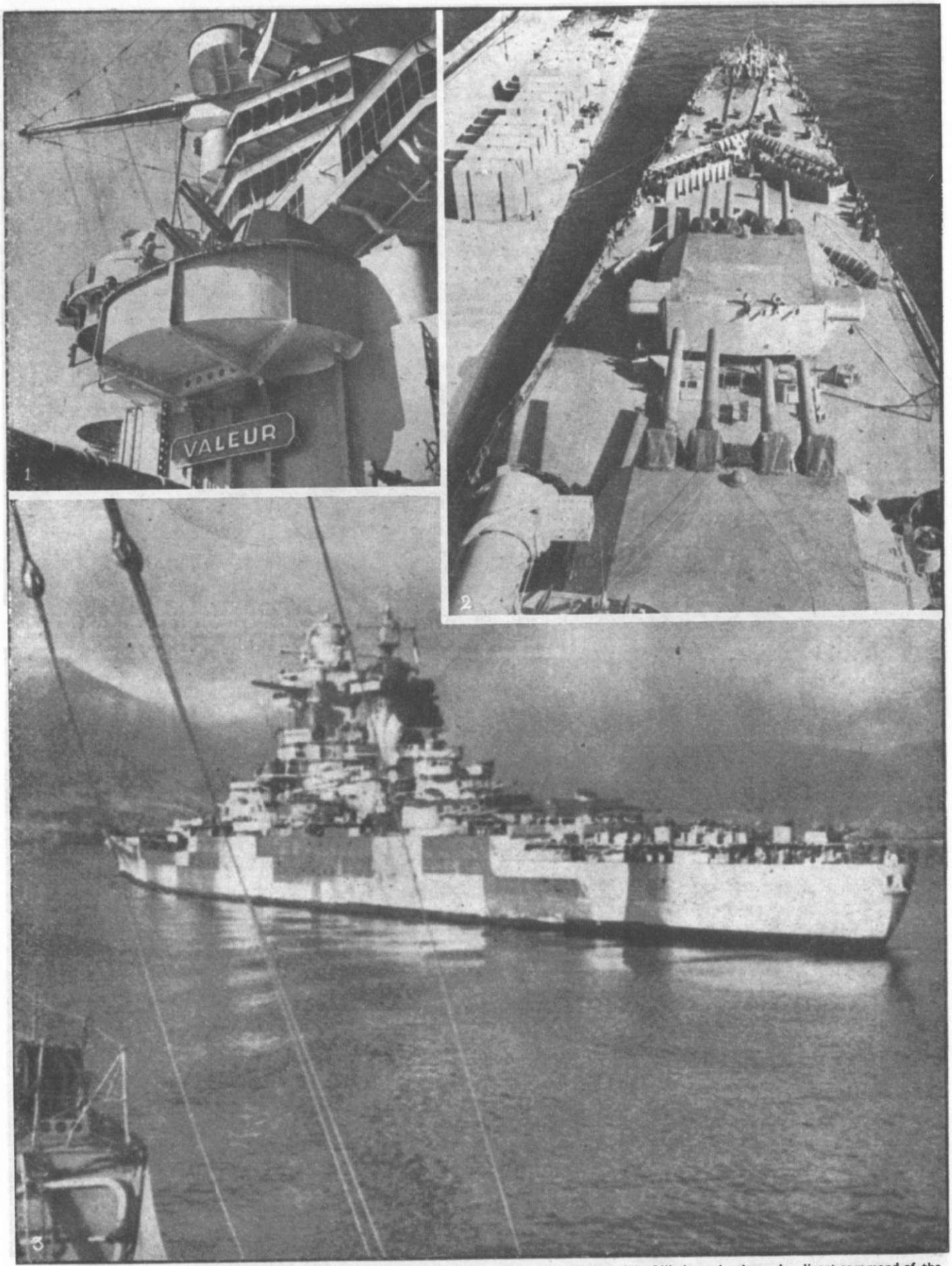
Bloody Struggle for Tarawa in the Central Pacific

FIERCE BATTLES on Tarawa and Makin, outer Japanese defences, raged from Nov. 20-23, 1943. Above, U.S. troops pause after fighting their way ashore at Tarawa. Left, knocked-out U.S. tank surrounded by fuel-drums used by enemy planes.

TARAWA ATOLL was the chief Japanese air base in the Gilberts, and there U.S. forces struck the first blow of a long-term offensive in the Central Pacific. This photograph shows one of many smashed enemy pill-boxes, tribute to the Allies' terrific fire-power. Two U.S. Marines on the extreme left look at fallen Japanese under a broken palm. (See eye-witness story in page 474).

Photos, Associated Press, Keystone

France's Richelieu is at Sea with the Allied Fleets



GIANT FRENCH BATTLESHIP, the Richelieu recently returned to Oran from New York to join Allied naval units under direct command of the Royal Navy. Disabled by British naval aircraft on July 8, 1940, at Dakar, this 35,000-ton vessel was repaired in America, where she arrived last February (see page 617, Vol. 6). 1, One of her Bofors A.A. gun platforms with the exhortation "Valeur" beneath; such plaques are a feature of French warships. 2, Looking down on the 15-in. guns and foredeck. 3, Entering Oran harbour.

Photos, British Official

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

I Baled Out Over Bomb-Battered Pantelleria

After terrific Allied naval and aerial bombardment lasting 13 days, the Italian island of Pantelleria, in the Sicilian Channel, surrendered on June 11, 1943 (see pages 70-71). One of our airmen who took part in the aerial assaults relates his thrilling mishap in a letter home. He is Flt.-Lieut. Fry, with many successful sorties over enemy-occupied Europe to his credit.

FLT.-LT. R. H. FRY, whose graphic description of a parachute descent from a burning plane appears in this page, completed his second tour of operational flying by this 'enjoyable' experience at Pantelleria. *Photo, Carl Cloud*

BECAUSE of weather conditions we were forced to attack fairly low, and we were hit by flak and set on fire. After some difficulty in clipping on my parachute, due to the smoke and flames, and in opening the front escape hatch, on which I had been lying and which had been damaged by flak, I baled out, followed by the pilot, the others leaving by other exits. I can remember most distinctly my thoughts at the time, such as "So you've bought it at last!" and "It's too bad; shortly I shall be blown to hell when we 'prang.' . . . If only I could open this hatch and bale out there'd be no trouble."

However, the hatch did open, and out I went, never before having been so glad to leave an aircraft. I remember no sensation in falling other than a pleasant rush of air, until I pulled the rip cord with my left hand.

As the chute opened I could see the silk blowing out. Then came a gentle tug as she opened fully and checked the fall, tightening my harness automatically. I found that swing and drift could be corrected by tugging on the suspension cords and spilling air, and I thoroughly enjoyed the descent. You can imagine my intense relief, even though it might mean being taken prisoner. As I descended I saw that if I was not careful, I should probably drift into the sea; so I spilt air vigorously, which quickened the rate of descent and, as luck would have it, I made land by about a hundred yards.

Actually I landed on a very rocky promontory, which at fifty feet up looked quite pleasant and smooth in the dim light, but at twenty feet looked, as it was, an appalling landing surface, and then the slow descent seemed to change to a rush. I pulled on the shrouds, and the next moment was on the ground without too big a bump. But the ground was rocky, and I banged my right knee, tearing a ligament, which prevented my moving far.

I scouted round for a hiding-place, and, having found one, made a bed of my parachute therein. I decided I was not going to be taken prisoner if I could possibly avoid it. I heard what appeared to be parties searching for us, but I was well hidden; and as luck would have it I was still wearing my water bottle, and I had some Horlick's tablets in my pocket. I eventually decided my position from the coast direction and stars, and settled down to enjoy the not so distant bombing, which was a fine spectacle.

With the coming of dawn, night bombing ceased, and shortly I had to hide again, as there were enemy moving not more than about fifty yards away. During the day, bombing again became intensive, and the naval bombardment was really terrifying—strong points, not so far from me, were some of the targets—and never in my life before had I been so frightened.

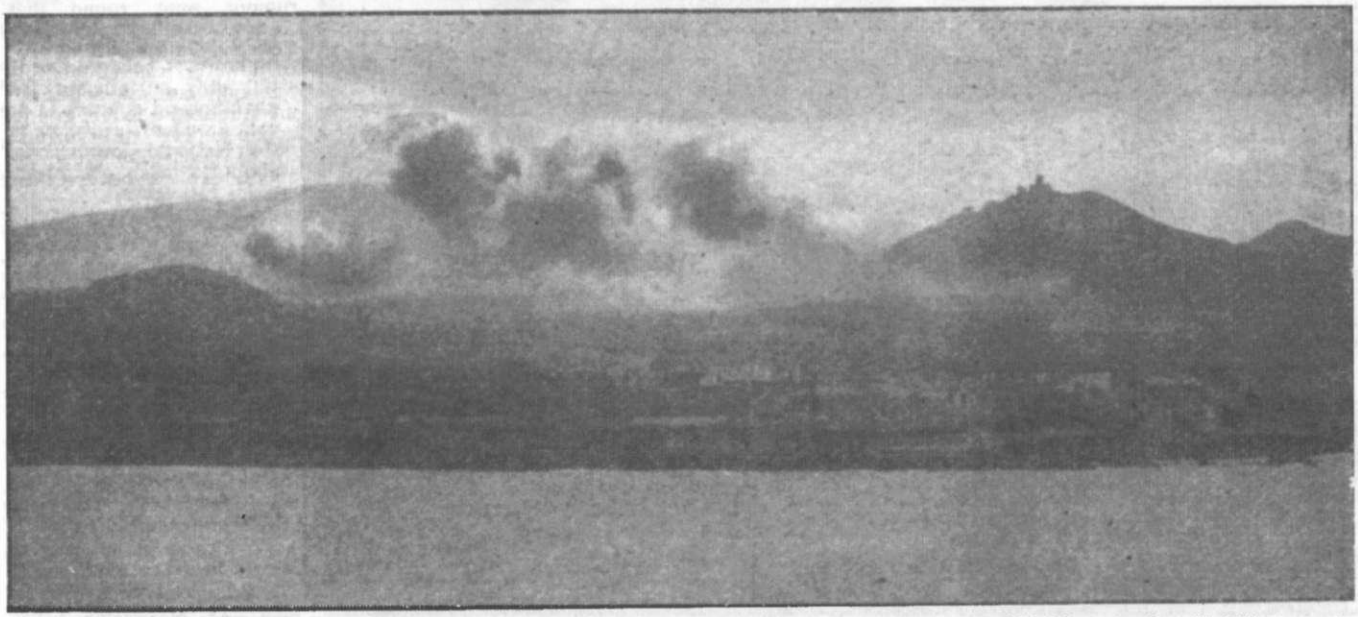
The surrender (of Pantelleria) came as a very welcome event and, after waiting an hour or so in case of mistake, I set off limping painfully to find our troops. The enemy appeared to be overjoyed at another successful surrender, and were now very friendly. I spoke to some, and watched them destroying some of their equipment and packing their kit ready to become P.O.Ws. After about a five-mile limp up and down hill, making detours for craters, booby traps, and so on, I contacted our forces and shortly was on board one of the ships, where I received excellent attention. After this it took me three or four days to make camp by way of Algeria, where I found two others of my crew had returned. The other two were not located, and are presumed killed.

Men, Mules and Mud I Saw on Monte Camino

One of the key heights on the road to Rome, Monte Camino enemy positions were broken into by the 5th Army by December 7, 1943. War Correspondent Alexander Clifford describes appalling conditions mastered by the foot-slogging troops, in this vivid dispatch written on the night of Dec. 4, published here by arrangement with The Daily Mail.

THEY were fighting in the rainclouds on Monte Camino all today. Just because this battle is so big and serious, it is not moving fast. On paper today's results were the occupation of a few knobs and peaks and crests which have numbers, because they have never been important enough to have names.

But to get them there was expended a wealth of bravery and endurance in conditions as appalling as anything we have met in this war. As important as anything else in this battle is a path. It is a horrible, steep, twisting mule-path which climbs the barren side of the mountain. Now history is flowing along it. It is as literal a lifeline as ever existed.



BOMBS BLAST PANTELLERIA, then Mussolini's island fortress in the Sicilian Straits. It was occupied by Allied forces on June 11, 1943, at a cost of only 40 casualties, so intensive was the preliminary "softening" by air and sea bombardment. The readiness of German troops to capitulate in Tunis was duplicated by the Italian garrison of Pantelleria, when about 11,000 prisoners were taken. In his account, above, Flt.-Lt. Fry describes the enemy as being "overjoyed at another successful surrender." *Photo, British Official*

When I climbed up it this afternoon there was a yellow stream of rainwater cascading down it. The little pebbles and the large boulders seemed slippery whatever sort of boots you had on. But if you didn't walk on stones you were walking in brown mud, which might only be three inches deep but might suddenly deepen to 15 inches.

The path was so steep that you had to lean right forward to keep your balance, and in five minutes you were sweating, despite the bitter, driving rain. All day it rained with a violence that would have created records in England, but the supply column moved steadily like an endless band. Everything depended on it.

BOWED men in tin hats and greatcoats splashed to the waist in mud, with 40 lb. boxes of rations on their backs. Their faces dripped with rain and sweat. Sometimes they stumbled on slippery rocks and dropped to their knees in the stream. But the check was only momentary, and none seemed to stop for rest. Other men were festooned with ammunition. Others had big, blue haversacks filled with all sorts of odd spare parts which were needed.

There were mules scrambling up laden with blankets. They were driven by blasphemous British troops who went past grumbling softly that they were hired as soldiers, not muleteers; someone had to drive the mules!

Most men had bulky shapeless gas capes against the rain. Some wore sacks over their heads like coalheavers to keep the rain from running down their necks. It wasn't a well-dressed army, but it was a very efficient one. Every so often they had to clamber aside and lodge themselves against some boulder to let the down traffic pass, including wounded borne shoulder-high on stretchers by four men each.

One moment the column stopped with a jerk and all heads swung up to the cliff top. The Germans had begun to lob mortar shells over. But there was nothing much anyone could do. You could lie face downwards against the banks if you liked, but it didn't protect you much, and you got up dirtier and wetter than before. The best thing was to climb on. The men, fighting in the swirling mists at the top were living the life supplied to them by that one mule track. Everything they ate was cold and rain-sodden. Only an idiot could be cheerful in these conditions. No one could enjoy doing these things. Yet the grumbling one heard was not sullen or bad-tempered. Men didn't seem to suggest that too much was being asked of them.

Scattered round in barns and stables and wine cellars, unit headquarters were fighting to keep the battle going. I suppose half a dozen times today I heard conversations like this: "Number Nine have pinched four of our mules? . . . That's a bloody bad show. You'd better pinch some from someone else. . . . Listen, I've got to have those mules; we've got to get greatcoats and mortar-bombs up quickly . . . Yes, both coats and bombs; they're calling out for them . . .'That's right up towards the convent, but it's a monastery, not a convent—can't you tell the difference?"

It has been an unceasing strain to keep this battle supplied. But the battle itself has started very well. It is a fight for one isolated hill, a hill so formidable that it was a major problem even getting on to it to meet the Germans. It seems that our concentrated artillery smoothed the path for the initial assault, but the enemy is holding on with skill and tenacity, and every yard is being contested. Monte Camino will be remembered as one of the big battles of the campaign.

How We Escaped the Gestapo Drag Net in Oslo

This story of the German mass arrests of Oslo University students on November 30, 1943, is told by two students who, warned in time to evade the Nazi net stretched across the city, reached Sweden after a 23-hour journey on skis. Deportations to Germany commenced on December 8.

IT all began on November 8, when about 2,000 of us Oslo University students sent in our letters protesting against the arrest of eight of our professors and many students. These arrests followed immediately after protests had been made by the faculties, and the action was supported by everyone. Apart from the handful of Nazis, no one intended to support the new regulations which had given the Nazi rector, Hoel, power to admit whom he wished to the University, regardless of qualifications other than political ones. Afterwards, a travel ban was imposed on all the students. Before any of us could leave Oslo we had to make a special application to the Nasjonal Samling (Quisling Party) Youth Service, who then referred it to the State Police. They usually refused to issue a permit.

Fourteen days before the big German drive was made, however, the travel ban was lifted. Everything now seemed to be all right. A few students went to their homes in various parts of Norway, but the majority stayed in Oslo. Then the Nazis began attempts to get all the students to withdraw their protests. The "authorities" published a "law" regarding the detention of people who were considered "dangerous," namely those who were opposed to the Germans and their lackeys, the quislings. As this did not have any effect, a printed form was distributed to all students. On it we were asked to state whether we thought our protest was "in order." This did not result in anything.

Then, in the early hours of Sunday morning, November 28, the fire which precipitated matters broke out in the great Aula Assembly Hall in the University. The fire brigades were called out by an anonymous person, and the whole affair was shrouded in mystery. On Monday morning Norwegian police guards appeared at the University, and took up their places, and inspected all students' identity cards. Then our suspicions that something was about to happen were confirmed. Nothing more happened that day, however, except for the Nazi Press campaign blaming the fire in Aula on "communistic elements," but on Tuesday the rumour went round that students should keep away from the University. Most of us, however, believed that this was only an attempt from unauthorized quarters to provoke a students' strike, or that the Nasjonal Samling were about to make one of their usual manœuvres.

Later in the day the story went round that there were to be mass arrests of students, and that they would be deported to Germany. Many of us—particularly those who had been engaged on opposition work—took heed of the warning and kept away from the University. Most students, however, believed that this was a false alarm, or that it had been circulated by the Germans in order to create confusion.

We two met in Oslo soon after 10.30 that morning. We saw lorries loaded with German and Norwegian police being driven in all directions. We made our way to Marjorstua, where we met other

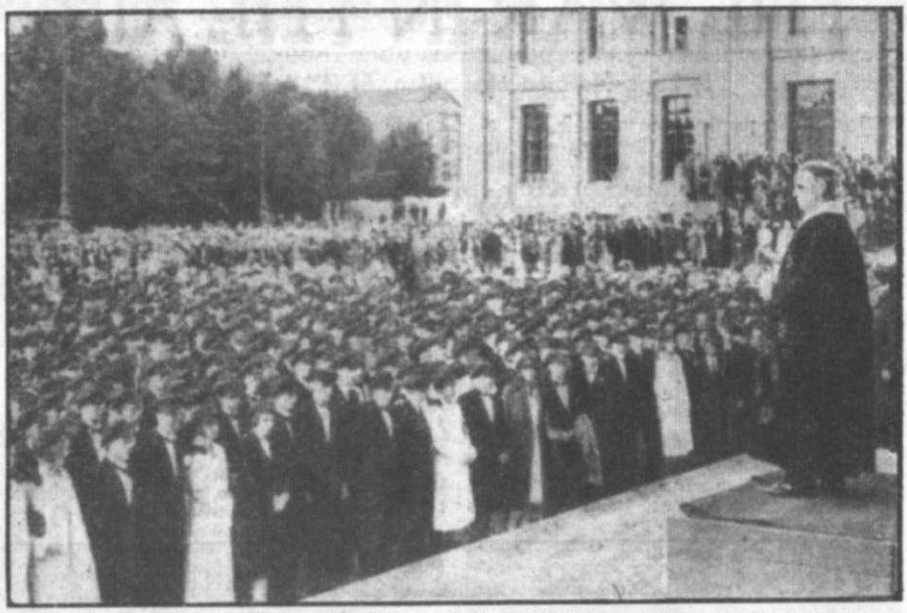
STRETCHER BEARERS move towards the front line on the 5th Army's Camino sector. They are shown passing through the ruins of San Clemente at the base of the famous Monastery Ridge, where fierce fighting resulted in the announcement of an Allied victory on Dec. 8, 1943. The rigorous conditions imposed by rain and mud are described by an eye witness in this and the preceding page. *Photo, British Official.*

science students, who told us that the arrests had already begun at the Natural Science Department of the University at Blindern (just outside the city), but some had managed to get away. It was difficult to know what to do. We did not dare to go to our homes, because we knew the police would be looking for us there. We just wandered around the town for a while, and then realized that we had to get out of Oslo before the Gestapo's control became absolutely effective.

We took a tram, and as we passed Karl Johan (the main street) we saw great crowds in front of the University buildings. The students were being brought in in batches. The police were using all kinds of vehicles—lorries, cars, motor cycles and combinations. We travelled to a suburban railway station by tram, and while making the journey could see the Germans driving outwards to occupy all the road junctions and bridges round Oslo. We took a train without difficulty, travelled a little way and then changed to another one. Up to now the Germans were only covering the roads. On the train we talked to a Norwegian who had just been visiting the State Hospital in Oslo. He told us that the hospital had been occupied by the Germans, who had placed machine-guns in the doorways and corridors. Many of the medical students, he told us, had heard the rumours and had kept away from the hospital.

When we were some miles out of Oslo we continued our journey on foot. We were, of course, going east towards Sweden. On the way we were helped by good people, and among other things were given skis. When darkness fell we took our direction from the stars, as we had no compass. About 11 o'clock that night we reached a lake where, fortunately, we found a boat. We clambered aboard, and as there were no oars we used our skis as paddles. It was freezing hard, and when we reached the other side our skis were coated with ice which made the going difficult on the other side.

All night we kept going, and at 8.20 in the morning we reached the frontier. It was another hour and a half before we reached a Swedish town, after having walked and skied for the best part of 23 hours. We were given a terrific welcome, and the best meal we had had for years. Then we were able to read in the newspapers the great reaction the mass arrests had caused in Sweden. Judging by what we saw and heard in Oslo when we left, we estimate that about 1,000 men students and about 500 women students escaped the German drag net. Some 4,000 students were actually enrolled at the University, but about 1,000 of them were engaged on agricultural work. Only 1,500 of the remaining 3,000 were rounded up on November 30.



OSLO STUDENTS being addressed by their Rector, Prof. Didrik Arup Seip, on Matriculation Day, 1939, a few months before the Germans invaded Norway (April 9, 1940). Rector Seip was arrested and taken to Germany soon after the Occupation was completed. His defiant spirit remained with his students, many of whom, as is told here, have been rounded up and sent to join him in captivity. Some have since been released. *Photo, Royal Norwegian Government*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

DECEMBER 8, Wednesday *1,558th day*

Italy.—Announced Monte Camino captured by 5th Army.

Russian Front.—Yelisavetgradka district, centre of Kirovograd region, taken by Russians. Heavy German losses in battle S. of Kiev bulge.

General.—Mr. Roosevelt visited Malta. Oslo University students arrested on November 30 deported to Germany.

DECEMBER 9, Thursday *1,559th day*

Italy.—Desperate fighting took place on Adriatic front for Orsogna.

Russian Front.—New Russian drive brought Red Army to within 17 m. of Kirovograd.

China.—Changteh recaptured by Chinese.

DECEMBER 10, Friday *1,560th day*

Italy.—Announced 5th Army had cleared Monte Camino and Monte Maggiore ridges.

Russian Front.—Znamenka, in Dnieper Bend, captured by Russians.

DECEMBER 11, Saturday *1,561st day*

Russian Front.—Mass panzer attacks S. of Kiev bulge held by Russians.

Air.—Luftwaffe lost 138 fighters during raid on Emden by escorted Fortresses and Liberators.

Sea.—Announced recent Atlantic convoy battle resulted in destruction of 5 U-boats by Coastal Command Liberators and naval vessels.

General.—Mr. Eden and Mr. Winant, U.S. Ambassador, returned to Britain.

DECEMBER 12, Sunday *1,562nd day*

Italy.—Announced San Leonardo captured by 8th Army, and second bridgehead across Moro River secured.

Russian Front.—Chigirin district, centre of Kirovograd region, captured by Red Army.

General.—Treaty of "amity, mutual aid and collaboration after the war," signed in Moscow between Soviet and Czech Governments.

DECEMBER 13, Monday *1,563rd day*

Italy.—8th Army steadily pushed back Germans between Majella mountains and Adriatic Sea.

Russian Front.—Russian troops entered outskirts of Cherkasy.

Sea.—Revealed that in May last, task force of U.S. Navy commanded by Rear-Admiral Hustvedt operated with British Home Fleet off Norway.

General.—Announced that President Roosevelt flew to Sicily on his return from Cairo and Teheran.

DECEMBER 14, Tuesday *1,564th day*

Russian Front.—Fall of Cherkasy, last German Middle-Dnieper bastion, announced. Radomysl, S. of Malin, evacuated by Red Army.

Australasia.—Announced that Australians on Huon Peninsula (New Guinea) had crossed Sewi River with tanks. U.S. heavily raided Arawe (New Britain).

DECEMBER 15, Wednesday *1,565th day*

Italy.—Capture of Caldari by 8th Army announced.

Mediterranean.—Eleusis, Kalamaki, and Tatoi airfields (near Athens), and the Piraeus, raided by over 300 bombers and fighters. Innsbruck and Bolzano, key towns on Brenner Pass, heavily raided.

Russian Front.—Mogailovka and Beloziere, S.E. of Cherkasy, taken by Soviet troops.

Australasia.—U.S. troops of Gen. Krueger's Sixth American Army landed in New Britain at Cape Merkus between Gasmata and Cape Gloucester. Preliminary naval and air bombardments softened up the area preparatory to seaborne attack. Australian troops captured Lakona (New Guinea).

DECEMBER 16, Thursday *1,566th day*

Italy.—Fall of Berardi to Canadian troops of 8th Army announced. Fierce fighting continued in the Ortona-Orsogna sector. Revealed that on December 2, nearly 40 German bombers sank 17 Allied merchantmen in Bari harbour.

Russian Front.—Novoseltsy, 35 m. S.E. of Cherkasy, taken by Red Army.

Air.—Berlin heavily raided; 1,500 tons of bombs dropped.

General.—Announced that President Roosevelt had returned to United States.

DECEMBER 17, Friday *1,567th day*

Russian Front.—German counter-attacks in Kirovograd sector defeated.

Australasia.—Japanese bombers and fighters raided Arawe (New Britain).

DECEMBER 18, Saturday *1,568th day*

Italy.—Fierce tank battle raged on 8th Army front. New Zealand troops cut the Orsogna-Ortona road.

Mediterranean.—Two enemy destroyers engaged by patrol boats and light craft of Royal Navy and U.S. Navy near Elba.

Russian Front.—Germans fought to a standstill in their Kiev offensive.

Australasia.—Announced that U.S. troops had captured Arawe peninsula (New Britain).

DECEMBER 19, Sunday *1,569th day*

Italy.—Fall of San Pietro to U.S. troops of 5th Army announced.

Mediterranean.—Innsbruck and Augsburg (S. Germany) bombed by Fortresses.

Russian Front.—Announced that troops of the First Baltic Front under General Bagramyan had launched an offensive near Nevel; breach of 19 m. deep and 50 m. wide made in enemy's defences. Yezersishche, Gribachi and Bytikha taken. Four war criminals (3 German and 1 Russian) hanged in Kharkov public square before 40,000 people.

Australasia.—Arawe aerodrome (New Britain) occupied by Americans.

Pacific.—Taroa Island, in Marshall group, bombed by U.S. aircraft.

S.E. Asia.—Bangkok, capital city of Thailand, attacked by R.A.F. and U.S. bombers in first long-distance raid since creation of Eastern Air Command.

General.—Announced all combat units of R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. in the S.E. Asia theatre to be united into single air force, the Eastern Air Command, under Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse.

DECEMBER 20, Monday *1,570th day*

Italy.—Fall of Consalvi to 8th Army announced.

Mediterranean.—Rail yards at Sofia (Bulgaria), and airfields at Eleusis, near Athens, bombed.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops captured 70 places W. of Nevel.

Air.—Bremen (1,200 tons of bombs dropped) bombed by Fortresses and Liberators; 50 enemy fighters destroyed in day's attacks. Frankfurt very heavily raided at night; over 2,000 tons of bombs, including 8,000 and 4,000 pounders, dropped in 30 minutes by force of Lancasters and Halifaxes. Mannheim-Ludwigshafen attacked.

General.—Revealed that recently discussions had taken place in Alexandria between representatives of Marshal Tito's Yugoslav partisan forces and those of British and U.S. fighting forces, concerning the implementation of Allied military support. Full agreement was reached. Military coup d'état overthrew Bolivian Govt. under Gen. Enrique Peñaranda.

DECEMBER 21, Tuesday *1,571st day*

Italy.—8th Army further improved its positions in prolonged fighting in area between Ortona, on Adriatic, and Orsogna at foot of the Majella mountains.

Russian Front.—S. of Nevel, Russian troops captured over 100 places, including Rassiliki and Gribali (20 miles W. of Vitebsk). Germans renewed their Kiev and Kirovograd counter-offensives.

Air.—Military installations in Pas de Calais area of N. France heavily attacked by hundreds of Allied bombers.

General.—Announced several prominent Frenchmen, including M. Flandin, M. Boisson and M. Peyrouton, arrested by French National Committee on charges of treason.

Flash-backs

1940

December 11. *Sidi Barrani captured in General Wavell's Western Desert offensive.*

December 12. *Germans heavily raided Sheffield at night.*

1941

December 9. *Indian and S. African troops reoccupied El Adem (Libya) and raised the siege of Tobruk.*

December 17. *Japanese landed in N. Borneo, from which British troops had withdrawn previously.*

1942

December 14. *American forces captured Buna village (New Guinea) from Japanese.*

December 16. *Russians opened offensive in Middle Don area on front of over 60 miles.*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THE difference between the air and the sea methods of warfare was well illustrated by the report of the sweeps of a combined British and American fleet to an area within the Arctic Circle and some 200 miles off the Norwegian coast, operations made some months ago, although revealed only in December 1943.

These naval sweeps were apparently made to entice the German warships Tirpitz, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Lützow to come out and fight. They did not appear. One German aircraft flew over the Anglo-American armada, and was shot down.

Conrad tells in his book, The Raider, the Frenchman's view of the blockade of Toulon by Horatio Nelson. The French ships just do not come out to meet the British ships that haunt the blue seas like white ghosts on the horizon. A fast British frigate—captured from the French—sails close inshore seeking information, giving rise to the traditional navy phrase "eyes of the fleet." The French want to get rid of the encompassing ships of the blockading force. An old French seaman gunner called Peyrol, a former member of the brotherhood of the coast, does the trick at the cost of his life by planting false dispatches into the hands of the captain of the frigate, and on this information Nelson sails off on his vain chase to the West Indies, to return later to fight the Battle of Trafalgar.

THE naval method does not change. We have today the same methods as Nelson—with this difference, that the ships cannot sail so close to the enemy coastline because of longer-range guns and the still longer range threat of bomber and torpedo aircraft. Nelson did not have to lie 200 miles off the French coast, as the Anglo-American warships lay off the Norwegian coast.

Now, just what was the point of this display of modern naval power? Could anyone really believe that the German ships would come out and fight what was presumably a superior force (for if it was not a superior force, what was the point of sending it there?). With the experience of the 1914-18 war and of the present war to demonstrate naval methods, was there any reason to expect that the enemy naval force would come out and fight? Surely we know by now that the metier of battleships is to stay in harbour as the kings of the chessboard of war—the most precious but least manoeuvrable of all the pieces, the ones that stick it out to the end of the game—and then assume the titles of winner and loser.

VICTORY Over the Submarine Won by Superior Aircraft

Wars are won most quickly by concentrating force to do the most damage to the enemy will and power to wage war. Is this principle followed by sending a powerful battle fleet to sea with the object of enticing an enemy fleet to come out to fight? How much fuel was used in this operation? How much man-power (perhaps our scarcest asset in this war) was deflected into a manoeuvre which could achieve nothing? Have we not already seen in the Far East that the victory-winning weapon is the aeroplane, and that when allied with ground forces it can sweep the enemy before it?

Has it not been demonstrated that sea power as formerly known is dead, and that the principal place of sea power today is to transport men and materials to enable soldiers and aircrews to fight together on land, and to enable aircrews to fight over the sea? Is there anyone who doubts that victory over the submarine has been largely won by the use of aircraft, whose superior manoeuvre, speed, and vision have done so much to oust that terror of the oceans?

Why then must the navy continue to conform to its ancient pattern of waging war, burning up fuel, and employing man-power in the factories dockyards, harbours, railways and everywhere to provide picturesque sweeps that can have no effect upon the enemy's conduct of the war, and make no impression upon his power to wage the fight? If the effort which was expended upon this naval gesture (for surely that is all it was?) could have been accorded to the manufacture of bombs and bombers, the training of aircrews, and the multiplicity of industrial requirements that lie behind every large raid on Germany, a still greater air blow might have been struck at the enemy's power to continue the war.

THE very fact that the enemy warships were so far from west central Europe is in itself significant. The weapons that drove them out of the ports of France and Germany were the bomber and the torpedo-bomber. These are the weapons that will continue most to harry them wherever they are to be found. If the Navy had proceeded to the Arctic zone with a sufficient fleet of aircraft of the kind required for attack upon the enemy vessels; something might have been accomplished. But naval air power had handicapped itself by the choice of aircraft of too-short range, carrying bombs and torpedoes of too-small size, to do the destructive work that might have been effected by quite different aircraft.

It has not been officially disclosed, but perhaps one of the manoeuvres of this armada within the Norwegian Sea was concerned with the attack of the miniature submarines on the enemy Tirpitz and other small craft in Altenfjord, near Hammerfest, on September 22, while another was possibly an escort to the attack of a number of aircraft from a U.S. aircraft carrier upon eight merchant supply vessels in Norwegian coastal waters. Even if this were so the result is small compared with the energy put out by the two nations to effect it. Again, recently the United States sent a naval task force close to Truk, the Japanese naval base in the Caroline Islands, in the expectation that part of the Japanese fleet might be enticed out to fight. But the enemy failed to respond.

Large naval ships cannot guarantee an engagement with the enemy's opposite numbers. They dare not proceed within striking range of the enemy ships when the latter are in harbour. Into the engagement must go submarines or aircraft. What then is the purpose of these floating big gun batteries, that seldom get a chance to fire a shot in anger, that are targets for underwater and aircraft, and that absorb such a large amount of the war effort to build, equip, munition, provision, man, and maintain?

THE Committee that reported on the Vulnerability of Capital Ships to Air Attack (see p. 348), stated in one part of their report: "The advocates of the extreme air view would wish this Country to build no capital ships (other Powers still continuing to build them). If their theories turn out well founded, we have wasted money; if ill founded, we would, in putting them to the test, have lost the Empire." How much of the Empire have we temporarily lost, and must fight hard with the help of air power to regain, through ignoring the views of the practical commonsense air-minded realists of the twentieth century? That Committee and the Admiralty had their way. We now know that capital ships alone failed to give protection to the lost lands.

WORLD'S LARGEST FLYING BOAT, the Martin Mars, seen here during its final tests, has been handed over to the U.S. Naval Air Transport Service, it was announced on Dec. 3, 1943. The Mars will be used to convey men and materials to distant war theatres. It is a 70-ton plane with a wing-span of 200 ft., carries 15-20 tons of cargo and has sleeping accommodation for 32 men. It has four 2,000 horse-power engines, and has flown 4,375 miles non-stop, in 34 hours 17 minutes. *Photo, Planet News*

Apropos Capt. Macmillan's comments on the war at sea, readers are referred to the editorial note on p. 486.

U.S. Airmen Strike at Japanese in New Britain

RABAUL, VITAL ENEMY BASE IN NEW BRITAIN, captured by the Japanese early in 1941, was heavily attacked by the 5th U.S.A.A.F. on Nov. 2, 1943, when 3 destroyers, 8 cargo ships, aggregating 50,000 tons, and 4 coastal vessels were sunk. The enemy lost 67 fighters. 1, Blazing and sinking ships in the harbour. 2, U.S. dive-bomber reaches its carrier with engine on fire. 3, Parachute bombs falling on enemy airfield; note protective revetments round bombers, and crashed fighter on left. See also map in page 109.

Photos, U.S. Official, Keystone

Disillusionment Spreads with Debris in Berlin

WIDESPREAD DEVASTATION was caused by the six big R.A.F. raids on Berlin Nov. 22-26 and Dec. 2, 1943 (see p. 472), and ensuing street scenes such as these are shot with grim irony for the people of Britain. Bombed-out Berliners queue at an emergency food centre (1); others besiege an improvised market (4). Members of A.R.P. Luftwaffe unit (2) remove furniture. From the Heroes' Hall, porters carry away art treasures (3). The British Embassy was damaged; German firemen find Sir N. Henderson's car (5) still flying its flag. Tackling a fire (6) *Photos, Associated Press, Keystone, Planet News*

Editor's Postscript

THERE are only two ways in which the Germans can be forced to give in. One is breaking up their war effort by persistent bombing so that they cannot produce enough planes and tanks and ammunition to make good their wastage and keep near the Allied output. In this connexion we must keep in mind what Mr. Ernest Bevin pointed out not long ago—that the Nazis can use the labour of 130 millions of people, while we have only 17 million workers. True, there are vast numbers in the United States, but even so our total hardly comes up to that of all the Nazified countries put together. Unless large numbers refuse to work for Hitler, he can go on for a good long time yet. The other possible ending might come through the German army declining to fight any longer a war it cannot win. Last time it was the generals who decided to throw up the sponge. How near they may be to that today we cannot even guess. The broadcast warnings which their fellow-generals in Russia (as prisoners of war) are giving them as to the war being lost may have some effect. It is a clever move by the Russians anyway.

I HAVE always welcomed the end of a year. Partly because as a child I found the days after Christmas dull and eventless by comparison with the jolly, exciting joys and presents of Christmas Day. Also because with the turn of the year one could begin to look forward to "the flowers that bloom in the spring." Now under the nuisance of the black-out the prospect of lighter mornings and evenings, though still far off, fills us with pleasurable anticipation. Surely that is something to make us feel more cheerful. Whether the wave of hopefulness about the finish of the war, which began in November and has not yet subsided, is likely to be justified no one can tell. There is no extra charge for hoping. Only it is best not to expect too much.

IT is said that Mr. Bernard Shaw is leaving the bulk of his fortune, which must be very large, to be spent on making the spelling of English more phonetic than it is and so inducing more people of other nationalities to learn our language. If this be true, it seems likely that the money will be wasted. Changes in language do not come in that way. They occur gradually, imperceptibly. You cannot alter spelling any more than we can add cubits to our statures by "taking thought." We do spell in an irrational way. Take the number of different combinations of letters we employ to represent the sound of "e" as in "bed." I have put down nine right off and composed a rhyme of them.

Lying in bed
I called to my frend
And gest:
Are you at rest
Or have you lesure
To take any plesure
In the tale of a shepherd
Attacked by a lepard?
He beried his hed.
Oh, shut up! he sed.

In a reverse way there are many pronunciations of the letters "ough." Here is a sentence containing them:

Though the tough cough and hiccough plough me through,
O'er life's dark lough my journey I pursue.
Illogical? Yes. But isn't life illogical too?

M. NUMAN MENEMENCIOGLU, appointed Turkish Foreign Minister in August 1942. He accompanied President Inönü to Cairo for the Three-Power Conference, December 4-6, 1943, where he had important discussions with Mr. Anthony Eden. He was born in 1890. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

EVERY soldier has a number. That is a sound plan. No one objects. Every motor-car has a number. Everybody sees how necessary that is. Why, asks a friend of mine, should not the whole population be numbered? Not in the sense of the word which implies counting. We do that; we have had censuses for a very long time. What my friend means is that we should each of us have a number, as each soldier has, and should be called on to produce it whenever we have dealing with public offices or come into contact with the police, whether making complaint or having complaint made against us. This mode of identification would be useful in many ways. I have even heard it suggested that every person ought to have an identity book, in which the main features of his or her life would be on record. Would there be any great objection to this, except on the part of people who had something to hide? We do not mind having our present identity cards and being asked to show them when we have any official business to transact. "Why not keep the system which war has introduced and extend it when war ends?" my friend asks.

AMONG my friends are several professional men in the thirties who have recently been receiving their calling-up notices for the Services. Eight or ten days would seem to be the average time allowed them before having to report to their units, which is little enough to set one's affairs in order, I think. Though naturally it is a bit of a wrench to change one's occupation at this stage in life, I find that, on the whole, they face the immediate prospect with little grumbling. They are wise as probably it will do them a great deal of good. Physically they should certainly be the better for an open-air life and plenty of hard exercise. They will benefit mentally as well. Their outlook will be widened. They will learn more about life than books have ever taught or could ever teach them. They will be able to study human character at close range and in wide variety. I won't go so far as to say that I envy them, but I do rather wish that, when I was their age, such a change had occurred in my life. At any rate it would have been an experience very interesting to look back on—assuming, of course, that I had come through it alive.

MANY people ask me if I can tell them why this war has produced no songs to compare with Tipperary, Keep the Home Fires Burning, Pack Up Your Troubles, and others that are still sung today after a quarter of a century, in default of any good new ones. I have no reason to suggest, except that the craze for crooning seems to have made all tunes sound alike—and all equally dreary, and that song composers seem to be afraid of melody and well-marked rhythm. The same lack of war ditties is complained of by Germans. They have not even got their Hymn of Hate, which they used to roar out lustily in the last war. It was forbidden because a Jew wrote it, and another was published in the obscene weekly edited by the Jew-baiter, Julius Streicher; but this revised version never caught on. Its refrain:

England is the curse of the world;
She knows but greed and hate and gold

is poor stuff after the concentrated venom which the Hebrew writer of the original Hymn of Hate got into his vigorous lines.

ONE of the many changes that this war has seen is the disuse of the monocle, even by the Prussian officers who used to wear it almost as part of their uniform. Every picture of a general or colonel would show the single eyeglass, without cord or rim, held firmly in the eye. I can't imagine Rommel with one. Rushing about as he does, he would never be able to keep it fixed. As for the monocle in our own Army, where it was pretty popular at one time, it has disappeared. I saw a man in the Strand wearing one, and for a moment I could not think what it was. It had a gallery to it and was therefore easier to retain in position than the rimless glass of former days. What a curious fashion it was! Mostly the eyeglass was worn for swank, because it seemed to give the wearer an advantage over other people. It did not always do that. I once saw a young exquisite drop his monocle in his soup. He wiped it and put it away!

WAR may foster heroic virtues; it certainly increases the prevalence of petty vices. I was told in a shop the other day, one of those shops where the articles for sale are displayed on counters all over the floor, not merely round the sides, that a great many small things were stolen nowadays, far more than used to be the case. The pilferers were difficult to detect. For instance, a schoolboy, evidently from a respectable home, was suspected of having taken two pocket-knives, but not until he was seen to pocket a third could anything be done. Then he was told he must give the knife back. He declared he had not got it, but a threat of fetching a policeman made him produce it and stammer the excuse that he took it for a friend. Nothing was said about the other two knives he probably stole nor were his parents informed of his delinquency which they should have been.

Captive From the Land of the Rising Sun

SCANTILY DRESSED JAPANESE PRISONER, wounded in the right leg, marches before two men of the U.S. Marine Corps. He is one of the very few survivors of the enemy garrison of some 4,000 on Tarawa in the Gilberts. The Marines landed on the Tarawa and Makin atolls on Nov. 20, 1943, and three days later the costly fighting ended with the capture of both these places. (See page 503.)

Photo, Associated Press

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